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OF

THOMAS CHALMERS, D.D. & LL.D.

PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH,
AND CORRESPONDING MEMBER OF THE ROYAL INSTITUTE OF FRANCE.

VOLUME TWENTY-FIRST.

GLASGOW:

WILLIAM COLLINS, S. FREDERICK ST.

LONDON: HAMILTON, ADAMS, & CO.

THE SUFFICIENCY OF

A PAROCHIAL SYSTEM,

WITHOUT A POOR RATE,

FOR THE RIGHT MANAGEMENT OF THE POOR;

WITH

TWO ESSAYS ON COGNATE SUBJECTS.

THE FIRST READ TO THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE,
THE SECOND TO THE ROYAL INSTITUTE OF FRANCE.

BY

THOMAS CHALMERS, D.D.& LL.D.

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PROPERTY OF
PRINCETON
THEOLOGICAL

PREFACE.

The substance of the following treatise was delivered in occasional lectures to students of Theology, for their instruction in one branch of parochial management—on which should they proceed in after life, it will exempt them from those secularities wherewith the office of a clergyman is too often overladen; and enable them to give themselves wholly to the ministry of the word, and to such other duties as are strictly ecclesiastical.

This will account in part for that style of personal address, from which it will appear that the work has not been wholly delivered, in its transition from the chair to the press.

But there is another species of personality which requires an explanation, if not an apology; and for which I must throw myself on the indulgence of the candid reader. I mean the egotism which pervades the whole narrative of the operations that took place in the parish of St. John's. This, in some respects, was plainly unavoidable; but might perhaps have been forborne in the treatment of certain objections and on which many resist to this hour, the important lesson to be drawn from the success of our experiment in Glasgow—now become experience; and capable, with the most perfect certainty and ease, of being realised in all other places. The only defence which I can offer is,

that one should be willing to incur many hazards—even that of appearing ridiculous—rather than omit whatever might conduce to the establishment of a principle, which, if carried into effect, will be found charged with the most beneficial influences both on the character and comfort of the great bulk of mankind.

We owe an apology to the purchasers of our Series for presenting them anew with a number of extracts from its former volumes. But as the compilation of these has been framed on the principle of bringing them together from the places where they lay distant and dissociated with each other, and making all to bear on the one great argument of the following work—we think it better, that our reader should be saved the trouble of following out all the references for himself, by setting the most important in an Appendix before him within a small and manageable compass.

We were induced to publish the first of the two subjoined essays, because of the obvious connection which it suggests between the Extension of the Church and the Extinction of Pauperism.

We should not have ventured on the publication of the second, had it not been signified to me by M. Mignet, one of the Secretaries of the Royal Institute of France, that the republication from their Transactions of a work so obviously philanthropic in its design, would be viewed with ndulgence by that Honourable Body.

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PROPERTY OF
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ON

THE SUFFICIENCY

OF

THE PAROCHIAL SYSTEM.

Section I. *On the encouragements for holding intercourse with the common people, and the various ways of doing them good.*

1. There is a certain political antipathy, the characteristic of a whole class, which disposes many to look coldly and adversely on the differences of rank in the world; and which has also misled them into a wrong philosophy, when speculating on the principles and the mechanism of human society. The homage which is generally if not universally felt towards men simply as the holders of wealth, or station, or family distinction, is treated by such, not merely as a pusillanimous affection, but as a prejudice—an illusion of the fancy which it is the prerogative of reason to expose and to dissipate—an arbitrary or factitious sentiment, which, in the progress of light and of larger views in the world, will at length be extirpated from all breasts by a sounder and better education than that which now

enthrals the spirits of our race, and holds it in still remaining bondage to the senilities of an older period at length wearing fast away. It is thus that deference to rank is held by them to be rather a conventional feeling than an attribute of the species—having no place of stability either as a primary law, or even as a necessary result of laws in the constitution of our nature.

2. This is fortunately one of those speculations which Nature is too strong for—who asserts her own supremacy, and visits the transgressor with her obvious displeasure, when the wayward resistance is made to any instinct or tendency which her own hand has implanted. This is never done with impunity; and so all history demonstrates the evils and sufferings, which, in the shape of so many chastisements, come upon society—when, broken loose from her ancient holds, the distinctions of social order are set at nought; and a universal lawlessness of spirit becomes the precursor of a universal anarchy. It is with political as with physical theories when the lessons of experience are disregarded, that experience always steadfast and true to her own processes gives forth a practical refutation of both. But when the hypothesis is of inanimate matter, all the harm of the disappointment might be the mockery of a confident anticipation. Not so when the hypothesis is of men, to be acted on or carried into effect by a change in the framework of human society—the misgiving of which might be followed up by a general derangement and distress in the unfortunate community that has been made the

subject of some headlong adventure, some rash and reckless experiment. Such is the invariable result, when any of the special affections of humanity are uprooted, or rather when in some period of epidemic frenzy, they for the time are kept in abeyance. The inequalities of condition in life are often spoken of as artificial. But in truth they are most thoroughly natural; and it would require the violence of a perpetual stress on the spontaneous tendencies of every society in the world to repress or overbear them. The superiority of one man to another in certain outward circumstances of his state is not artificial but natural; and the consideration in which the occupiers of the higher state are held is natural also—insomuch that the public feeling of reverence for the grandee of a neighbourhood has an ingredient of nature in it, as well as the domestic feeling of reverence for the father of a family. Now what we affirm is, that neither of these affections can with impunity be violated, or without injury being done—in the one instance to the good order of a household, in the other to the good order of a commonwealth. More especially of the social affection do we aver —that when superseded in its operation, one main buttress of the social and political edifice is thereby damaged or destroyed—a lesson which the finger of history has often recorded in characters of blood; and chiefly in those seasons of revolutionary uproar, when, in the absence of this wholesome and balancing restraint, society vibrates between the fitful excesses of popular tumult and the severities of a grinding despotism.

3. There is a very general foreboding in our day—that, even now, we are fast ripening for such a catastrophe; and we will not say that they are the common people of our land who are altogether to blame for it. It is true that on their part there might be a criminal dislike and defiance to superiors; but it is just as true that these superiors, on the other hand, might deserve the forfeiture of all that influence and respect, which their place and their circumstances could otherwise have both gotten and maintained for them. For though a reverence towards the holders of rank be natural, the resentment of their oppression is also natural; and so even would be the return of this pained and irritated feeling, though there were no higher provocative than their mere indifference or neglect. The very distance at which the rich keep themselves from the poor, were enough of itself to engender a hostile feeling in the bosoms of the latter, and to fill them with all rankling and suspicious imaginations. The alienation becomes mutual; and even though on the one side, there should be nothing more or nothing worse than the habitual inattention of minds otherwise taken up, this might bear to the general eye the aspect of a lordly or aristocratic scorn; and if so interpreted, will separate by a still wider moral interval the patrician and plebeian orders of the community from each other. It is true that this reverence of which we have spoken forms part of man's nature. But his is a compound nature, made up not of a single but of various affections—any one of which, as the affection of rank, might be neutralized, even prevailed

against, by the operation of the rest. The deference for rank is by itself so strong, that, when not overborne by other influences, it mightily conduces to the stability of our social system; and for this beneficial end is inserted, we have no doubt, as a principle in the human constitution, by the author of our frame. Yet it is not so strong, but that it might be nullified, nay reversed, by passions stronger than itself; and it is of vast account therefore to the peace and well-being of society, whether a tendency so wholesome shall be thwarted by conflicting or aided by conspiring forces—a difference this, for which the upper classes themselves are deeply responsible. Were all great men good men—were the natural respect for station at all times harmonized with by the natural respect for virtue—were the homage spontaneously given to every holder of superior rank strengthened by the homage given as spontaneously to the intelligence or the accomplishments of superior education, and still more by the gratitude which substantial kindness, or even but the passing attentions of frank and honest affability never fail to awaken—With such a concurrence of the natural influences all on the side of order and good will, there might still by a series of pacific changes, be the progressive amelioration of human society; so as that all anarchy and tumult might be banished from the land, and a revolution become a moral impossibility.

4. Should there ensue such a crisis then, it will not be the multitude who are alone to blame for it; but the holders of fortune and rank will have

their full share of responsibility for its atrocities and its horrors. The truth is, that people of humble estate are most feelingly and gratefully alive to the notice of those whom Providence has placed in a more elevated station than their own; and never does this principle stand more demonstrably forth as a real ingredient in the constitution of our nature, than in the superior charm of those recognitions or personal kindnesses which descend from the occupiers of a higher sphere on the children of poverty and toil. Even a passing smile of courtesy on the street is not thrown away, but has in it a certain influence or power of graciousness; and this is enhanced tenfold, when any son or daughter of affluence enters the houses of the poor, and is sure to find in consequence a readier access into their hearts. It is in the power of any to make the trial and satisfy himself of the truth of this averment. Let him go at random to the lowliest of their tenements, though with nothing but a question on which he wants to be resolved, and therefore not to serve them but to serve himself with the information which he is seeking at their hands; and see whether his interrogation, if but put in the language of courtesy, is not followed up by the language of respect and of kindness back again. This, however, is but a first and faint intimation, the outset signal as it were of a disposition which might afterwards be cultivated into a most close and beneficial alliance. Instead of a question of indifference let it be a question of family interest—relating for example to the education of children, and bespeaking a kind desirous-

ness on your part to ascertain their scholarship and stimulate them onward to a higher proficiency than heretofore—we say there is not one in a hundred who would not welcome, and that most cordially, such an approximation for such an object; and with whom it might not ripen into an intercourse of charity or mutual good will, between them of the lower and you of the middle or higher classes of society. On their part there is an open door. It is for us to make it a "great and effectual door"* of usefulness. If our commonwealth is to fall by the dark and angry passions of the multitude, there will be something more in that coming tempest than the ferocity of a misguided, there will be also in it the vengeance of a neglected population.

5. One fears to indulge so far as to give, though no more than an adequate description, of this intercourse with the common people and its attendant results—lest he should be charged with luxuriating in the picturesque; and carrying his readers through a sort of moral fairy-land greatly too beautiful for this our rough and actual world. It is all the more fortunate that the means and materials for observation are within our reach—so that any man may test and ascertain for himself what, in sober earnest, the experimental truth of the thing in question really is. Let him assume then for the enterprise on which we would set him, a given population, say of the worst and poorest —for the lower down, both in the moral and the economical scale, the better for the purpose of a

* 1 Cor. xvi. 9.

substantial verification. Let the number not exceed what any lay office-bearer of the church might easily and beneficially overtake. Let him however not be afraid of three hundred as too many for either the strength or time he may have to bestow on this undertaking. But we must provide him with an errand which might explain and justify his entrance into every house of this his special and selected territory; and we shall only at present single out one from the many, wherewith, in the course of his growing intimacy with the people, he might afterwards charge himself. Let us suppose it then to be his resolute aim, so to influence and control the habit of all the families, as that each boy within its limits shall learn to read, and each girl to sew. For carrying this benevolent purpose into effect, let him look out the best and nearest seminaries which might suit the convenience of the children; and then let him try all which can be effected by counsel and persuasion for gaining the consent of parents—and never desisting from the prosecution of his self-imposed task, so long as there remained any exceptions in his district to a universal attendance on the means of education. He will be astonished to find how near he shall have gotten to a full accomplishment of his object; and it will greatly expedite his success, if he make a study of the best and most judicious methods for helping it forward. A little personal trouble on his part will be of prevailing force with the parents in the way of securing their co-operation. In particular it is not to be told how kindly it will be taken,

should he give an occasional half hour of an evening to inspect and examine the scholarship of his juvenile clients—whether in single families, or in little groupes from a few of the contiguous households. I will say nothing now of pecuniary advances—whether in presents of books, or prizes, or the payment of fees. One of the most pleasing discoveries perhaps which awaits him, is to find how marvellously little he need be called upon for any sacrifice of this kind; and what I want you to understand, is the influence for good that might be obtained by nothing more than a series of cheap and easy attentions—involving the occasional appearance of himself in the dwelling-places, and occasional acts of converse and companionship with the inmates. Let any man who delights in doing good, and has a taste for the cordialities of human intercourse, but embark in the walk which I have now pointed out for him; and he will not miss, even of a present reward, in the reciprocations of confidence and kindness which meet him on his path. But on this we must not expatiate—else we shall provoke the incredulity of those hard and heartless utilitarians who imagine that nothing can be true which is beautiful, and that nothing can be beautiful which is true. They will suspect us of dealing in fancy pictures; and, merely because they are realities which are pleasing to look at, or admit of being feelingly told—would they repudiate them as so many glittering imaginations fit only for the poet's pen—instead of being, what in plain earnest they are, the realities of truth and soberness.

6. In this question, the experimental is all on our side; and the ideal all on the side of our antagonists. When they think of the plebeian swarms who are huddled together in wretched tenements, throughout the lanes and alleys, the dark and dismal and putrid recesses of a large city, there is the apprehension in their minds of something so thoroughly outlandish, that they are positively afraid of entering these unexplored habitations—standing in the same terror of their inmates, that they would of unknown animals. It was in 1822 that I made a round among the poorest houses which we took at random in the parish of St Giles, London, along with Mr Joseph Butterworth, of Russel Square, who told me, that it was only a few months before since they had made the discovery of the movement being safe. We met the same reception that we should experience everywhere—one of perfect civility, even though on our part we had nothing more substantial than civility to offer—a mere question respecting the state of their health, the comfort of their houses, or the scholarship of their children. Instead of ours being the imaginations of poetry, theirs are the imaginations of fear—the great difference in point of authority betwixt us being, that theirs are the fancies of men who keep at a distance; ours the findings of men who have come close to the subject of contemplation, and, on our repeated and personal encounter therewith, tell what we have seen with our eyes and heard with our ears. We affirm nothing so fantastic or sentimental, as that our first appearance is to operate like a spell on the affections of

the natives; or with something like the instant force of love at first sight, to bind us together by an affinity of trusty and sworn companionship. We speak not yet of their companionable virtues, but of their companionable manners; and that what is kindly meant on our part, will be kindly taken upon theirs. It is to the initial facilities that we are now attending, by which the common people encourage and open up a way for our future household intercourse with themselves and their families—leading to an acquaintanceship convertible, if made to overspread the whole community, into the best results, both on the economics and the morals of the general population. In other words, the barrier in the way of this hopeful and beneficial interchange, does not lie in any unwillingness or in aught that is ungainly and repulsive on their part; but in our own selfish indolence, our own callous insensibility to the considerations and the calls of Christian patriotism. And we repeat, that, should the fearful crisis of a sweeping and destructive anarchy be now awaiting us, it will lie as much, we think culpably and inexcusably more so, at the door of the higher as of the lower orders in the commonwealth.

7. Having now said enough of the access which there is to familiar converse with the common people, and that in virtue of a welcome and willingness from themselves—having we trust convinced the reader that this is not a romance of Arcadia, but a thing of as firm and home-bred staple as any of the every-day occurrences in human life—let us now, with all plainness and brevity,

unfold our own views of the account to which this intimacy, strengthening by every new visit to a family, or every new movement through an appointed district of families, might be turned. We suppose our philanthropist to have charged himself with a population of from two to three hundred, or somewhere about fifty families; and we shall now specify what a few of the various concerns are, on which, with a very little personal trouble and with almost no perceptible expense of time or money he might prove of substantial use to them.

8. We have already instanced the topic of education, as forming one of the most profitable occasions for this sort of intercourse. It branches into a great variety of distinct objects, all of which might be advocated on the same principle; and which, with certain precautions to be explained afterwards, might be presented without alloy, to the unmingled good of the people among whom you expatiate. We have already spoken of the week-day scholarship, both in reading and sewing, which it were well to foster till the habit had become universal. This applies chiefly to the young —among whom I have recommended it as your endeavour to promote a general school-going. But there is another and higher scholarship applicable to the men and women of all ages—wherewith even the secular philanthropist, who leaves the higher department of spiritual usefulness to others, might properly and beneficially charge himself. We mean the scholarship of Christian instruction; and for the advancement of which,

he might at least do all that in him lies to promote a habit of universal church-going. He will find at the outset of his connexion with such a territory as that in which we have placed him, that the great majority of the people go nowhere; and should there be a preaching station or a new church provided for their vicinity, he will find, that the same influential suasion which told on the attendance of the children at school, will not be altogether inoperative when brought to bear on the adult population, with a view to their Sabbath attendance on the lessons of Christianity. It is true that the subject of our present argument is on the best and likeliest means for helping forward the interest of the common people in things temporal—the well-being of their present life. But aware of the prodigious efficacy, even for these secular objects, which lies in the operation of moral causes—we should say of the functionary who hath chosen this, the secular good of the people, for his appropriate walk—that he is not out of place, when he lends a helping hand, both toward the erection of a church for the people of his charge, and the forming of a congregation out of their families. And on the same principle of its being quite in character, that he should help forward a church though he does not preach in it, might he help forward a Sabbath-school though he should not teach it. He might set the little institute agoing. He might provide the services of a teacher. He might stimulate the attendance of the young; or even of the parents, should the readings and the addresses promise to be of wholesome effect

on their own consciences and the order of their households. And many are the nameless other services, of object akin to education; and by which, through the medium of books, he might raise the standard of intelligence and worth throughout the families of his vineyard. If he be not enough of an ecclesiastical functionary to press home the lessons of the Bible on their hearts, he may at least see that in every house there shall be a Bible. He may circulate tracts, whether or not he should expound and urge the subject of them. Nor is it necessary that the humble literature in which he deals should be all of a sacred character. He might, and by the instrumentality of popular authorship, be most usefully employed in adding to the resources and enjoyments of the life that now is—as by means of a district library, in which I should rejoice to find works of household and cottage economy, works of civil and natural history, works explanatory of the various processes of artisanship, works of travel and miscellaneous information purified of all that was fitted to vitiate either the principles or the taste, even works of science as far as it could be made palpable and that was fitted to enlarge and elevate the plebeian understanding. An increasing demand for such as these would afford the pleasing evidence of an increasing sobriety—a substitution for the concourse of evening parties in haunts of low and sordid indulgence, of a better habitude among the people—a growing taste for the rational and social firesides of their now more virtuous and happier homes.

9. We know not, we shall not say a more

proud, but a more pleasing triumph, or one that gives truer delight to the feelings and well exercised faculties of a benevolent mind, than what may be called the prosperous management of human nature. We before spoke of a school for sewing. A humble seminary of this sort might be taught by one of the female householders, and held in her own apartment. A most beautiful supplement to this education, is that each scholar in her turn should have the care and keeping of this apartment, and with the special object that the home of her own parents should have the benefit of those habits in respect of cleanliness and good order which she had herself acquired. I had this management introduced into little institutes of my own within my city parish in Glasgow, and with the effect of a great and visible improvement in the interior of many of its plebeian habitations. Now this is a service which if he but lay himself out for it could be efficiently done by our visitor of a district. He could take cognizance of every such amelioration in the economy of his households, and give it the encouragement of his applause. His habitual calls might give rise to a habitual preparation for receiving him; and in this way may he be the instrument of raising the taste and comfort of the families. And whatever made for the health as well as comfort of the inmates might come most properly within the scope of his benevolent consideration. By his influence with landlords, or a little outlay on his own part, or the aid and co-operation of a medical friend, he might carry useful alterations into effect at the doors of

the houses or in the tenements themselves—or by some such signal service as helping on the drainage of a street, or the removal of obstructions and nuisances, may earn for himself throughout the little vicinity the credit of a public benefactor. A deal of substantive good might be done in this way—which, as being the manifestation and evidence of his undoubted good-will, will place him on vantage-ground for a still higher good, and arm his future persuasions with a moral force which in many instances will prove irresistible.

10. What as yet we have mainly required of our philanthropist is the sacrifice of his time and trouble—for with one slight exception, that of a pecuniary advance for the public health of his district, we have not yet spoken of his liberalities in money. Now then, it may be said, is the first time in which this element makes its appearance; and it may perhaps awaken your surprise—it may seem to your eyes like a reversal of the ordinary process—that I introduce it to your notice, not as passing from the pocket of the visitor into the hands of the people, but as passing in the opposite direction or from the pockets of the people into the hands of the visitor. It may not perhaps be the first thing he does; but the first thing we tell him to do, is not to give, but to get from them—an advice which we could offer fearlessly and unblushingly, even in the poorest districts to which we have ever had access, whether in town or country. We shall explain afterwards wherein it is that the great healthfulness of our process lies; but meanwhile we may give a few instances, in which, while devising to

the best of our judgment for their good, we, instead of lavishing upon them from our own means, draw on the capabilities of the people themselves. We do so, when we exact a payment, it may be in small monthly or weekly pittances, for their education. We do so, when we collect at Sabbath-schools for the expenses of the concern. We do so when we seek their contributions in pennies or halfpennies a-week for the formation and maintenance of a library which we make their own. But this is only teaching them to help themselves—a most useful lesson however—though we need not stop at this, for by right management, we shall find in them an equal readiness, and not only a prompt but productive liberality in helping others also. For example, we can make an effective appeal to them in behalf of missions, in behalf of church or school extension, or any other of the best and likeliest schemes of Christian philanthropy which are now afloat in the world. We shall have no difficulty in obtaining their consent to organize an association amongst them, which, on the system of small and frequent payments, will, from the number of individual contributions, yield a far larger amount than is generally counted on. Their interest in these things could easily be kept up and extended by monthly meetings, at which might be read in their hearing all the information of chief moment which comes out periodically; and this, of itself, is eminently fitted to beget a higher cast of sentiment, and altogether to exalt the popular intelligence—by supplying it with larger and loftier contemplations than before. One most precious

effect of such arrangements is, that, instead of recipients, the people become donors and dispensers of charity—and that too in the highest of its walks —an invaluable habit, not only as a moral barrier against certain degeneracies, but as the guarantee of other habits, in themselves the main ingredients of plebeian virtue, and which powerfully subserve the blessed result of a well-principled and well-conditioned population.*

11. It may be felt that we are now going beyond the limits of a strict secular philanthropy; and, doubtless, such is the close alliance between the moral and the economical—such the intimate dependence which the comfort of a people has upon their character—that we cannot bestow a full entertainment on the one topic, without trenching upon the other, and so as to establish a line of continuity in our argument from things earthly to things spiritual. Nevertheless, as there is a real distinction between the two services—so is it of great importance to the well-being of a people, that, in their behalf they should be undertaken by separate and distinct agents; or, that in the arrangements of a benevolent association, as of a church devising for the whole good of the families in a given neighbourhood—they should be vested in distinct office-bearers. But this is a matter which will fall to be adjusted afterwards; and, meanwhile, we can confidently aver of the philanthropist who limits himself to the services which we

* See the Influence of Parochial Associations, § 22–25, in my volume of "Tracts and Essays," being Vol. XII. of the series.

have now assigned for him, or who even acquits himself well and in the spirit of kindness of greatly fewer than these—that he will earn by it a mighty influence for good over the people whom he has thus selected as the objects of his care. They will not look unmoved on these his labours of love. It is not in nature that they should; for there is a spell and a sway in human kindness, if it but give the unequivocal tokens of its reality, which even the hardiest and most ungainly of our race feel to be irresistible. This is a law which has been mainly lost sight of in the innumerable projects of our day for the amelioration of society—the sweetening effect of mere acquaintanceship, though it should amount to no more than courtesy, between the men of higher and men of humbler rank in the commonwealth; and still more should it rise to cordiality, when it will be found that there are a moral action and reaction in the world of spirits, which, like the reciprocities of the material system, have been established by an all-wise Creator, to maintain the harmony and stability of the whole.

12. But we were going to omit one of the best services, at least of the secular class, which our little community could possibly receive at the hands of a benefactor—a service too in which money is concerned—not yet however money passing from the philanthropists to the people, but money belonging to the people and passing from them into the keeping and care of philanthropists. We mean the help and encouragement which should be given to a habit of accumulation, and more especially by providing for all its little proceeds a

place of secure custody in a savings' bank. We may afterwards state, though it must be in the briefest possible manner, the effect of this habit, should it become general, in elevating and that permanently the condition of labourers, by its sure influence on the wages of labour. Its moral benefits, are palpable both as a counteractive to dissipation and connected with the high qualities of foresight sobriety and self-command; and also as begetting a sense of property, and so giving them to feel a stake and an interest in the cause of social order, in the peace and stability of the commonwealth—thereby providing for their good citizenship, as well as for the respectability and comfort of their families. Certain it is that notwithstanding the absolute amount of such deposits over the whole empire, if one inquire piecemeal, whether among workmen congregated in villages or in the streets of our larger towns, he will find that the habit is very far from general; and can only be made so by the attentions of the benevolent being given piecemeal, each to his own separate groupe of contiguous families. It were no difficult achievement for each to make it general within the limits of his own selected walk—and to spread it from household to household, by making the example of one neighbour tell in argument on the practice of another. As it is, we have but rare and scattered instances of such economy among the common people. They have been too much left to find their own way to these most useful depositories for their humble savings. The district visitor could bring the aggressive principle to bear

on the habit of repairing to a savings' bank, as well as on the habit of attendance on schools or churches —and we are sure with a tenfold greater result than before, so as to make it nearly universal within his own portion of the territory.

13. But let us now resume the consideration of that in which after all the great power of our philanthropist lies. There is immense material benefit rendered to the people by the various services which we have now specified; but these he could not have done without their own co-operation, and this it had been impossible to carry without a certain mastery over their affections. He had no authority to force, save that moral authority, which has gained for itself a willing obedience, at once spontaneous and sure. It is his good will which has earned for him their good will. His attentions, the time and trouble which he takes, are the simple expedients, by which he gets his ascendancy over them. They indicate his kind feeling toward themselves and their families; and herein lies the great secret of his power. It may be difficult to explain, but easy to perceive, how this power should become tenfold more effective, by the concentration of these various good offices on the *contiguous* households of one and the same locality. There is in it somewhat like the strength of an epidemic influence, which spreads by infection, and more amalgamates the people both with him and with each other.* We wonder

* On the effect of this influence see the "Christian and Economic Polity of a Nation," in Vol. I, p. 76, being Vol. XIV. of the series; and in my volume on Church Extension, p. 56, being Vol. XVIII. of the series.

not that Lord Melbourne in one of his speeches should have expressed such jealousy of these household visitations—for though he misconceived the object of them, as if it had been to poison the inmates with a feeling of hostility to government, he did not in the least overrate their power—the power not by which a demagogue, whose element is agitation, inflames the passions of a restless and excited multitude whom he has lured from their occupations and their homes, but the power of Christian charity over human hearts; and which if once made to pervade, by the assumption of district after district, the great bulk and body of a population, would, in the privacies of domestic life, lay a deep foundation of peace and righteousness, not to be unsettled by those fiery spirits who now live by the impostures which they practise on a deluded and misled because a neglected commonalty—who are an easy prey to the bad, only because the good have not yet found their way to them. And it is incalculable by how little a sacrifice each may acquire for himself a lordship for good, and the best of all, because over the hearts of his own little community. I will not tell him beforehand, but leave him to the surprise of his own experience, when he finds by how few hours in the week, or such odd half hours of the time as he may have at his own disposal, he may obtain that mastery, which will open a way for him to the fulfilment of all his wishes. The passing run even of a few minutes among the households is not without its efficacy. Let him ever and anon be making presentation of himself to the same eyes; and he will be the talk

of people on the same stair—the object of a common reference and recognition among the inmates of his own locality. And a common object does beget a common sympathy. It is thus that the same numerical amount of attentions and good offices done to fifty families far apart from each other does not tell with half the influence they have, when discharged upon them in a state of juxtaposition—concentrated, as it were, within the limits of one and the same territory. It is marvellous how soon at this rate he might become the familiar of all, and even the friend, the intimate and confidential friend of a few, and these the best among the families of this little neighbourhood; and so it is that all the bland and beneficent influences of a village economy can be most easily set up in the moral wilderness of a city, in the very heart and deepest interior of a crowded metropolis.

14. What we most desiderate in an agent of charity, is to have one with the taste and the inclinations of a thorough localist—one who rejoices in a home-walk, and would like better that it should be pervaded thoroughly, than that he should scatter his regards among the thousand objects of a wide and distant philanthropy. I would rather that he restrained his ambition for what is great, so as that he might give himself wholly to the little which he can fully overtake. Better do one thing completely and well, than a hundred things partially and superficially. It is not to the magnificent survey of him, whose eyes like those of Solomon's fool are on all the ends of the earth, that I would look for any solid contribution to the

amelioration of our species; but to the humble pains-taking of many single labourers, each giving himself duteously and devotedly to his own manageable sphere, and satisfied that he has not lived in vain, if he have raised the tone of character, or added to the comfort by rectifying and improving the habits of fifty families. The result universal is made up of many items, and can only be arrived at by a summation of particulars. For the book of philanthropy, like that of philosophy, is a book of many pages; and it is not to universalists that we look for the completion of either, but to the manifold assiduities of those, who, whether by patient study on the one field or persevering action on the other, each fill up a single leaf or a single line of them. It is not by one great simultaneous effort, that even a single city is to be overtaken; but by the piece-meal and successive efforts of men engaged in the humbler but more practicable task of making out one district after another, and one parish after another—each labouring unseen by the general eye on his own little domain; but where the want of eclat and magnitude is amply repaired by the nearer approach which can be made to the objects of our benevolence, and so the more intense because the less divided affection—like that which plays in secret within the bosom of families and homes. We read in the New Testament parables, that each possessor of so many talents who turned them to full account was rewarded by the charge of as many cities. Certain it is, as we have already said, that there is a delight, one of the best and purest we can enjoy, in

the prosperous management of human nature; and it looks as if this, one of the pleasures of the good here, were followed up by a larger enjoyment of the same in the realms of light and blessedness hereafter. We know that there will be service there.* And if they who turn others into righteousness shall shine as the stars in the firmament, we may guess from this their sightlier elevation, that there will be superintendence there—as if the little that was well done on earth were to be followed up by larger powers and opportunities of well-doing in that region on high where charity never faileth.†

SECTION II.—*On the Difficulties and Duties of him who undertakes the office of Almoner to a given Population.*

1. HITHERTO, and in our description of the good offices which might be rendered to a people, when we introduced the element of money, it was not of money given to, but received from themselves—either as contributors for their own behoof to a savings' bank, or as the helpers in small and frequent offerings of a charitable scheme. But the philanthropist when he becomes an almoner, reverses this process. He gives, instead of takes; and one should like to know the duties, and as well

* Rev. xxii. 3.

† We have spoken at greater length on the general and magnificent result being only to be obtained by the accumulation of littles in our Christian and Economic Polity of a Nation, Vol. I., or Vol. XIV. of the series, p. 102–104.

the difficulties attendant on his ministrations in this capacity.

2. But first let me premise the obligation which lies upon all, of giving according to their means—either to relieve the want, or help forward in any other way the well-being of their fellows. Let us speculate on plans of benevolence as we may, benevolence itself will ever abide a stable category in the ethical system, and maintain its own place as the highest of the virtues. The great use of wealth is to do good with it; and though in the spirit of a practical atheism we may call it our own, every thought of the original fountain whence it comes, of the Parent and the Governor above who put it into our hands, should remind us that it is not a property but a stewardship. It is true that when compassion is given way to as a heedless and headlong impulse, it often does mischief. But to regulate is not to destroy; and when told that it is blessed to *consider* the poor, we are not to interpret this into a call upon the understanding to overbear the heart—but a call to bethink ourselves, not how to do little—but how to do the most, or how to do the best for them. And it will sometimes turn out that the best thing is to give, and with an unsparing hand—when benevolence may take to itself a free and full indulgence. In matters of philanthropy, it is not the office of consideration to damp the benevolence, but of benevolence to prompt the consideration. Some are jealous of all thought in the business of charity, as if it savoured of the coldness and rigidity of calculation; but let us remind

them, that it is the part of the liberal man, not only to do, but to devise liberal things—and that in the very soul or actuating spirit of liberality —not the spirit of that avarice which withholds, but of that wisdom which can devise the way that is most prolific of blessings to the poor—and which rejoices therein, not because the least expensive, but because the most effective method of well-doing. His guiding principle, whatever may be the aspect of his proceedings, or the interpretation put upon them, is not to give the least but to do the most for the happiness of the species—and it is thus, when performing his little rounds of humanity in the sphere that we have imagined for him, that he exemplifies in miniature the virtue of his great master, who went about doing good continually.

3. We believe that the surest method of avoiding all practical inconvenience in the conduct of life, and most of all in the conduct of charity, is a fearless committal of ourselves to the guidance, or a compliance as literal as may be with the counsels and commands of Scripture. That its morality is on the side of giving, and that too in the spirit of a most liberal and unsparing generosity, is a lesson which stands forth upon its pages in clear and uneffaceable characters, for the admonition of all ages—not to be explained away by the pretended discoveries of any science; and, in particular, not to be overborne or froze into utter heartlessness by the demonstrations and maxims of political economy. Let us in particular take the Bible for our directory in the matter of alms-

giving, with all the terms and qualifications which it annexes to the precept, and with all the light thrown upon it by the examples and other precepts of the sacred volume. More especially, let us not forget the secrecy wherewith it tells that our alms should be performed—not with the sound of a trumpet—not to be seen of men; but that our left hand should not know what our right hand doeth, or they on our left should not know what we are doing to those on our right. Now all this is violated, or at least virtually disregarded by him who goes forth on his district, the territory of his benevolent operations, in the *ostensible* capacity of an almoner. He may acquit himself as such, without showing himself as such—that is, be a giver of alms to such needy as he meets on his progress through the families of his charge, without its being known beyond their dwelling-places, without if possible its being anywhere guessed at throughout the main body and bulk of his population. On the principle of a readiness unto all good works, he may act incidentally as an almoner with the few who require or would be the better of such a ministration. But this need not be the general and far less the avowed character in which he appears amongst them. His moving principle we have all along supposed to be, the doing of that which is best for the good of his fellows—that in particular which is most for the real happiness and well-being of the little community within which he expatiates. At this rate, he is not called upon to stand forth in the general aspect of an almoner, but rather in the general aspect of a

friend—and so coming under the notice and recognition of the families, at one time in the character of an educationist who has to do with schools, at another as an economist who has to do with popular banks, at a third of a moral or even medical overseer who concerns himself with the health and habits of the people. These are doings out of doors, and in which he cannot avoid being seen of men; but alms like prayers should be done in secret, when doors are shut, and the two or three who are met together are only seen by their Father who is in heaven.

4. As there is a present reward in the keeping of the commandments, so often is there a present chastisement in the breaking of them; and never is this more strikingly exemplified, than when the law of secrecy in our alms is violated. Our philanthropist would be making a most injudicious outset, did he go forth on the field of his operations in the avowed or generally known capacity of a dispenser of money. We are not inquiring whether it be in the spirit of ostentation, or from the imprudent neglect of certain precautions for the concealment of his benevolence, that he should have become a recognised almoner among the families. We are but reasoning on the consequence; and feel assured that if this be their general understanding, it will give an altogether different result to his progress, and land him in difficulties which he will soon find to be inextricable. When once the secret of his liberalities breaks out, it will lead to a sudden expansion throughout his district, of a desire or an expectation to share in

them; and many are the families who should have welcomed his visits on any of the errands which we have already specified, and never once obtruded their necessities upon him, who, on this new errand of relief for indigence, will become the keen competitors for his bounty. It would have been altogether different, had he gone forth in another character, or given forth to the people another understanding of his object—as, for example, that his main design was to promote the education of their children, or their own Christian good, or the health and cleanliness of their confined and perhaps overcrowded streets, or the internal comfort and right order of their own special domiciles, or the accumulation of their little savings in a provident bank; or, lastly, to receive at their hands their own little contributions to some scheme of usefulness whether in the cause of religion or humanity. Did he but restrict himself at least visibly and avowedly to some one or other of these objects, or rather did he charge himself with them all put together, he might have sped satisfactorily with every one of them, and had the gratification of seeing that each of these benevolent designs prospered and made distinct progress under him. We do not say, that no poverty, whether real or pretended, would ever cross his path. Among his fifty families, there might be applications from some two or three per cent. of his whole number—landing him in a far more manageable task truly, than as if by open proclamation he had summoned one-third or half around him to make their endless draughts upon

his liberality. He has himself to blame for the consequent difficulties which will surely come upon him, and the heartless discouraging embarrassments which will multiply around him, and will probably overset his experiment altogether. It is he, not the people, who is responsible for all the clamour and confusion which now beset his person, and perhaps lay daily and regular siege to his dwelling-place. It was he who by his trumpet-call, or money-giving errand made as patent to every eye by the whole style of his proceedings as if it had been placarded upon his forehead, who first set their rapacity agoing; and which may in all probability grow into such strength, and rise in such a flood upon him as to drive him from the field. It is he and not they who should be reckoned with, for the irrepressible host of sordid and mercenary expectations, now sure to be lighted up by every movement which he makes amongst them. Instead of calling it their fault, I would call it a most natural reaction on his own folly.

5. We utterly mistake the common people, and are led to think of them most ungenerously, just from the absurd way in which we ourselves deal with them. Let any man place himself in a conspicuous station on a street or on a highway, and thence scatter money for half an hour among the passengers—we are not to wonder, though in a few minutes many hundreds should throng around him, and join in the scramble or uproar which he has himself created. And the very same exhibition will be made of our nature, should a district

visitor virtually though not directly or literally announce himself as a scatterer—whether of money, or of things purchased by money, among the habitations. There are many ways in which the intelligence can be given; and if once given it will soon spread. A distribution of coals will do it—laid down in visible deposits, by carts or half-carts, here and there at the doors of certain selected householders. Or a general parting of old clothes will do it—made up of cast-off suits from the benevolent in all parts of the town, and piled together in some well-known rendezvous for one of its destitute parishes. Or the notification sometimes made from a shop window will do it—of ladies' work taken in here, and hence given forth in behalf of the poor. Or the local missionary will do it, whom some wealthy philanthropist be it male or female has intrusted with money for any necessitous he might meet with in his rounds, and who for the credit of his employers lets out the secret of their liberality. We are not to marvel, if, in the train of such indiscretions, there should ensue among the people a general restlessness—an appetency and demand which never would have arisen spontaneously from among themselves, and which owe all their urgency to the cause *ab extra* that has excited them—a disturbing force that has unsettled many of the families, who, now agog from their wonted quiescence, are plying such claims and applications for relief, as otherwise they never should have dreamed of. It is not to be told how much this new element, of agitation it may well be called, is fitted to embarrass the

operations of the philanthropist. In all the other ways of well-doing which we have ventured to prescribe for him, he could have made satisfactory progress—progress in the number of deposits made to his savings' bank—progress in the number of juvenile attendants upon his schools—progress in the number of contributors to his benevolent associations and the yearly amount of their offerings—progress in the style and keeping of their dress and houses and furniture; and as the general result of the whole, even though not one farthing had been bestowed on indigence, a more plentiful enjoyment among the families than heretofore of the comforts and necessaries of life. If such a result have never been known to arise from the operations of the mere money-giver—if he have taken a district in hand, and is mortified to find, that, with all his liberalities, he has utterly failed to spread over it the face of a larger sufficiency or contentment than before—if envy and ingratitude and clamour and rapacity insatiable, be all the returns he has met with, and without any sensible abatement of the raggedness and filth and other symptoms of penury which first lured him to this enterprise—then let him be made to understand, that, for the purpose of doing ought like substantial or permanent good, something more is necessary than to *compassionate* the poor, he must also *consider* them; and let him learn at length that there is indeed a more excellent way of charity, than that to which his own headlong sensibilities have impelled him.

6. But we were speaking in vindication of the

common people, and to the higher points of their character if they were but rightly dealt with. The envy, the ingratitude, the clamour of which we have just made mention are not so chargeable on them, as on the unwise friends who have done all they could to tempt and to evoke the worst feelings or phases of our nature. Another treatment would have called forth another and finer exhibition of those whom, distinctively and not disparagingly, we designate the lower orders—by which we assuredly mean nothing else than that they are of humbler condition, or that Providence has assigned to them an inferior place in the scale of income or society to ourselves. They are fully our equals in all the essential characteristics of humanity; and more especially, on the subject of their wants, may we often observe a high-toned delicacy for which they do not receive the credit that rightfully belongs to them. It all depends on the style of our approach, or the character in which we hold converse with them. If we do not, by our offers and inquiries, obtrude the topic of their necessities upon them—the household visitor will be astonished to find how seldom, or in how small a number of cases, they will obtrude the topic upon us. If we on entering into talk with them, but place ourselves on the level of that equal and reciprocal courtesy which should pass between man and man, they will not often, not generally, step beneath that level, by descending to the attitude of a supplicant for our bounty. Most sensible we are, that we are not speaking the experience of a distributor or agent for an

almsgiving society—whether it be in the shape of money or fuel or soup or clothing. But we speak the experience of those who go forth on other and we will say higher grounds than those of common-place charity—some of which we have already specified, though for the most full and decisive verification of what we now affirm respecting the common people, we should look most of all to the experience of him who goes forth among them on the best and highest of all errands, or in the capacity of a religionist, and who at the same time has the good sense not to mix up the two ministrations—that on the one hand for their temporal, and that on the other for their spiritual necessities. If there be one topic more than another which puts the distinctions of rank out of view, and places high and low on the same even platform, it is that Christianity which tells of the common guilt and the common salvation, of the death which awaits all, and the glorious immortality alike held forth in the gospel for the acceptance of all. The man, who, intent on the souls of the people, plies them with arguments such as these, is upon high vantage-ground for testing the position that we now seek to establish. So long as they mistake him for an almoner, and if they have been much tampered with beforehand by ill-timed or uncalled for appliances, it is not in nature but that he will hear of their necessities—and more especially, if they have the imagination, either of his own unbounded wealth, or, which were still more fitted to excite their appetency, if they conceived, that, without a personal sacrifice on his part, he could give inde-

finitely to them, because he could draw indefinitely on the wealth and liberality of employers whose agent he was. But once that this understanding is dissipated, he will be in fair circumstances for verifying the truth of our principle; and it will astonish him to find, the almost instant subsidency of those hints and importunities which assailed the outset of his path. The truth is, that he who speaks religion to them, lets himself down to their own level, or rather brings them up to his —where they meet on the equal footing of the same hopes, the same liabilities, the same interests, as fellow-travellers to the same inheritance beyond the grave, and with the high preferments of eternity alike open to them. When two parties thus come together on the ground of their common humanity, neither will make the voluntary descent which is implied in the act of becoming a petitioner or dependant upon the other. The influence of which we now speak might perhaps appear of too shadowy or ethereal a character for the mere statist; and certain it is, that it does not admit of being expressed in arithmetic, or in that form of numerical registration, which he most relishes, and by which the results of experience become most palpable to his understanding. It is a matter of plain reality notwithstanding, and for this we could make a confident appeal to all who have made full trial of it. Let any friend of the common people go forth on the errand of Christianizing them, and even with the disadvantage of a reputed affluence, let him but keep by his topic, and urge on them the consideration of

their spiritual wants; and but for his own mismanagement, what we affirm is, that seldom or never will they in return urge upon him the consideration of their temporal wants, back again. For example, we would ask Lord Roden, whether he was exposed to any ungenerous reaction of this sort, in virtue of the Sabbath morning addresses which he was in the habit of delivering to an assembled peasantry? And Mr Cuninghame of Lainshaw, if the sabbath-school which he instituted and himself taught in the populous village at his door, laid him open, though lord of the manor, to that host of applications for the relief of their temporal wants which his appearance amongst them in another character would infallibly have called forth, and to which his simple juxtaposition had before exposed him? We know what their delightful experience was, and it tallied fully with my own. On my first movements through the poorest parish in Glasgow, I was thronged by urgencies innumerable, because of my official connexion with the secular charities of the place, and which did invest me with the character of an almoner in the eyes of the general population. It was a connexion therefore, which, when I had made the discovery, I resolved to abandon; and I will not forget the instant effect of this proceeding when it came to be understood—the complete exemption which it gave me from the claims and competitions of a whole host of aspirants, who crowded around me for a share in the dispensations of some one or other benevolent trust or endowment of other days; and yet the cordial welcomes I

continued to meet with, when after I had shaken loose of all these, I was received and recognised by the people on the simple footing of their Christian friend, who took cognizance of their souls, and gave himself chiefly to do with the scholarship of their young and the religious state of their sick and their aged and their dying. This was an experience which impressed me with the profound wisdom of the saying, "Who made me a judge and a divider over you?" and let me add with a profound respect for the delicacy and correct feeling of the common people. And this will be found even on lower walks of philanthropy, than professionally and by office belongs to a clergyman. The mere economist who busies himself with but the matters of secondary improvement or comfort, will find an open field in any aggregate of plebeian households, for the accomplishment of all that his heart is set upon; and, if he go rightly about it, without any of those distractions or perplexities which annoy the path, and are sure at length to upset the enterprise of a mere almoner, who, if he will treat the people as paupers, must not be surprised at the noise and confusion and often the outcries both of unreasonable demand and as unreasonable disappointment which they have brought about his ears.*

7. But are there not cases of real necessity, which, without the utmost hardihood, even cruelty, it were impossible to pass by? Because there is much of counterfeit, is there no actual distress?

* Christian and Economic Polity of a Nation, Vol. I. p. 273, 416, being Vol. XIV. of the Series.

When we read the denunciations of Scripture upon the one hand on those who shut up their bowels of compassion against the needy, and on the other are certified by the same Scripture that the poor shall never cease out of the land—are we, in the face of these authoritative testimonies, are we to give forth an interdict, not on the virtue of benevolence, but on that special modification of it, the virtue of almsgiving? And does not the Bible expressly tell us, to give to him that asketh, to give even to the evil and the unthankful—nay, most specific of all, to give *alms* of such things as we have? We are aware that to enjoin secret almsgiving is not to proscribe all almsgiving, and we accept of this qualification; but there is such an aspect of cold-bloodedness in the whole speculation of these foes to public charity, that we should like a distinct statement from themselves of what that is which we owe to humanity, when a case of distinct undeniable suffering and want comes in authentic exhibition before us.

8. There should be no blinking of this question; and it were the symptom of a weak or a worthless cause, did we seek to evade it. We desire no exemption for our philanthropist from any of those moral obligations, which, whether morally or Christianly, are alike binding upon all; and all we claim for him is the privilege of ascertaining the real state of every applicant, who lays the case of his necessities before him. It is surely no unfair demand that when one man places himself in the relation of a supplicant to another, that other should be entitled to place himself in the relation

of an inquisitor over him; and when we make use of this term, we do not mean that the inquiry should be conducted with harshness or insolence; for, on the principle of rendering honour to all men, it ought to be conducted with the most perfect kindness and courteousness and delicacy. All that we insist for is, that he who seeks of another's bounty, shall also submit to another's scrutiny. In the denunciation just quoted upon him who steels himself against a brother's imploring cry, it is presupposed that he knows the cry to be a true one—"If he seeth his brother have need." Give him then a sight of the necessity, that he may know what he is doing; and when once it is made to stand unquestionably and unequivocally before him, it were a violence to every principle whether of humanity or religion, should we deny, that if he indeed have of this world's good, it is his duty, his clearly imperative and incumbent duty, not to stifle the impulses of compassion, but freely and fully to give way to them—to clothe the naked, and feed the hungry, and provide accommodation for the houseless and homeless wanderer.

9. It may be thought that by these concessions, we beset our philanthropist, that is our district visitor, with difficulties inextricable; but in truth we have placed him on firm and high vantage-ground. He of all the adventurers in charity is in circumstances for knowing best what he is doing; and thereby escapes the discomfort of those, who, in almost every application that is made to them, are exposed to the necessity of giving in the dark. Instead of lying open to the solicitations whether of

real or pretended poverty, from all points of the compass and at all distances, he has assumed a definite and manageable field of observation, and can make himself daily more familiar with the habits and condition of the families who occupy his own home-walk—approximating almost to certainty regarding the effect of his operations—either as to the risk of evil, or the real good that might be done by them. Surely he who gives of his own substance, of that which belongs to himself, has at least the right of knowing what he is about; and it is by becoming the cultivator of a district, and making it his chief and special charity to be the benefactor of its families, that he takes the best way of making it good. Once let him be possessed of their confidence and good will, which he may soon acquire, and he will be at no loss for the guidance of his proceedings, on every tale of distress which he may be called upon to aid or to sympathise with. All we ask for him is that he shall have time to verify before that he shall be expected to relieve it. And he has means and opportunities without which the mere general philanthropist finds himself altogether helpless. He can inquire at the mouth of the most respectable next-door neighbours whose favour even whose friendship we might well suppose that he has already gained, and who would be as much scandalized as himself by an expenditure of that money on imposture and worthlessness which should be reserved for the alleviation of genuine distress. It is thus that in each instance of application from his district he can obtain a full and intelligent view of the case; and

should he authenticate it as a case of real unequivocal necessity, still more if merit and misfortune stand conjoined in the same individual or the same family—we would divest him of neither the feelings of a man nor the duties of a Christian—it will be at once his obligation and his pleasure to be liberal up to his power, to give according to the ability which God hath given him.

10. We should hope that this our household visitor is a Bible Christian, and if so he must be willing to distribute, ready to communicate. Yet to be the agent of substantial and enduring good among his people, he must not be hurried into acts of almsgiving, but have the privilege first of a searching scrutiny into the state of every asker, and then of a full consideration of what is best as well for his moral as his economic well-being. We have already said that if he avoid the error of going forth at the outset as a professed almoner, he will be exposed to vastly fewer applications, than if he made this the known errand of his search and entry into the habitations. And as a further experience he will have fewer still, if it be his determined habit to follow up each application by the inquiries which we now recommend to him. This will be the fruit of his nearer inspection, and growing acquaintance with the real circumstances of the people. His first impressions of their helpless and hopeless indigence will be greatly reduced by it. Let him fearlessly enter on the task—in the steadfast prosecution of it, let him face all its difficulties and imaginary dangers—let him not blink a single application or hide himself

from his own flesh, but from him that would either ask or borrow, let him not turn away—And the exaggerations, whether of a vice or a misery irremediable, which haunted his outset, will soon be dissipated. He will be astonished to find, as the effect of a proper wisdom and wariness on his part, that one or two simple and manageable cases are all which are left to him. Indeed one of the greatest beauties and benefits of this district system is, that it gives such advantage for a thorough discrimination; and so, while it relieves from the counterfeit, it enables one more and more to concentrate his attentions on the actual and the deserving poor—in beneficence to whom, there is enjoyment of the highest sort, the happiness and exquisite luxury of doing good. And, beside the enjoyment, we promise that he will be astonished at the lightness and facility of his task—so as at the end of the year, and after having rightly acquitted himself among two or three hundred human beings, and that in the most unlikely and outlandish territory which he chooses to select, he will realize in the little history of his proceedings Hannah More's exclamation—" O how cheap is charity, O how expensive is vanity."

11. And it follows not, even though, as the fruit of a previous discretion, his task as an almoner should have been reduced to the needful supply of one or two families—it follows not that the whole burden of these should fall upon himself. It is his duty, as their friend and consulting for their best interest, to point out the other resources on which they should draw, apart from and if possible anterior to his own liberality—as, first and foremost,

to stimulate their own industry, or suggest how they might abridge their own expenditure—thus teaching them how far they can help themselves; and secondly, if this be insufficient, to seek after their relatives, and with all proper delicacy on the one hand yet frankness and fidelity on the other recommend the case to them—telling them how right it is that one should help those of his own kindred; and thirdly, if there be a shortness and insufficiency still, and so as yet to exceed either the means or inclination of our visitor fully to provide for, to seek for aid in this work of charity from the benevolence of neighbours, and specially from those whose confidence he has won, and whose moral weight in their own little vicinity might secure a general approval and willing co-operation for all his views. By these few and simple expedients, he will achieve, and that chiefly from the home capabilities and resources of his own little territory, a conquest over all the difficulties of its right and prosperous management. So soon as he has enlisted on his side the kind regard of its families, and earned the credit of being their friend, the experiment is carried. There is not a case of distress or helplessness that he will find too much for him. Should he offer to head a little subscription for any casualty that might have occurred within his borders, it needs but the nearness and so the known certainty of the event to obtain a large concurrence throughout his population both of sympathies and substantial offerings; and should it be a case of recognised merit, as well as signal misfortune, should he be a reputable and well-liked neighbour

whom some visitation of calamity has befallen, the impulse could easily be given by which through the medium of a universal feeling to provide for the calamity and even to overpass it. It is thus that even though not able of his own means to relieve a tithe of the necessities in his district, there are both able and willing helpers within its limits by whose aid he will succeed in overtaking them. Their number makes up for the smallness of their individual offerings—by which I mean, not merely the formal contributions which are sometimes made in money, but the nameless daily unreckoned supplies of food and service which pass and repass between next-door neighbours by an internal process of charity among themselves. The amount no doubt is incalculable of these little unseen gifts and liberalities; but, as the fruit of very general observation, we can with all confidence affirm that it is incalculably great. It of course varies with the popularity of the individual sufferer, or in right proportion to the estimation in which he is held by the vigilant and sharp-sighted observers who are immediately around him—of those who have known him perhaps intimately and long, and are therefore capable of a far more wholesome and effectual surveillance, than can possibly be exercised by the paid inspectors of a poor's house. The degree of this spontaneous charity, kept up among the contiguous householders of every neighbourhood, may be regarded as a test of the reality of that distress which calls it forth,—a charity to which belongs the invaluable property of suiting itself, as if by a sort of self-regulating power, at once to the wants

and the merits of its object. Under its efficient guardianship, and more especially in a district organized as we would have it, there is the moral certainty that none would be left to starve,* and all would experience as the day came that the provision of the day came along with it.

12. Such is our confidence in these various expedients of anticipation as they may be termed, that we should deem it no marvellous achievement, if, in any aggregate of human beings in any town of Scotland, the formal allowances of public charity were in virtue of their operation, wholly superseded. And it marks at least our own sense of the internal capabilities which are to be found within the limits of such a district, that we should feel surer of a prosperous result were it in the hands of an intelligent pious and well-principled overseer, conversant in the habitudes of the working classes and himself scarcely if at all elevated above them—than if it were in the hands of one known to be wealthy, and so far removed from the common people, as to be without the experience either of their wants or their ways. For the purpose of bringing the people into a right economic condition, we should rather that the management of the former than that the opulence of the latter were brought to bear upon them. It was our own experience in the poorest and most populous parish of Glasgow, that the applications for public relief were fewer from sections under the superintendence of a clerk or even a mechanic, than from

* Christian and Economic Polity of a Nation, Vol. I. p. 409, being the XIV. of the series.

some that were under the superintendence of an affluent and prosperous citizen—the former intercepting such applications by finding a way to those internal and surely better resources which he knew how to draw upon, the latter finding it easier to meet the alleged necessity by liberalities of his own. It was instructive to observe that the public or sessional fund was not the better but the worse of such liberality—being exposed thereby to the demands of that still unsatiated rapacity which itself had excited and set agoing, and which but for it had never been called forth. Yet we should be unwilling to dissociate the rich from these undertakings, from such works and labours of love as we have now been specifying. There is a right style of management by which even they might neutralize the evil which often springs from the imagination of their unbounded affluence. In the first place it is the more special duty of a visitor in this condition of life, when he does give, to give in secret. But in the second place, it were well to let the object of his bounty know that what he does give is at his own expense, therefore with a personal sacrifice on his part, and not as the agent of a society or an almoner for others. They utterly misconceive the poor, who do not understand how this simple revelation should call forth a delicacy on their part, which operates as a check on their else indefinite demands and expectations. And there are other and most legitimate expedients by which still further to strengthen this barrier of protection against that rapacity, which, whetted by every new success that its extortions meet with,

is never satiated. He should tell them frankly and fearlessly both of their duty and of his own—and that it is as much their part to be moderate in their demands, as it is his to be liberal in his dispensations of charity. He should lecture them well on the virtue of not being burdensome to others; and not be sparing of his most serious remonstrances, when he comes to observe that they have been practising on the simplicity of the benevolent, that they have been making a trade of their alleged poverty, and that the ill-gotten money thus obtained by them they have spent worthlessly or even carelessly. Let them know that you will not by your heedless and indiscriminate giving counteract the wholesome discipline of nature; and that if they will persist in being lazy epicures or irreclaimable drunkards, they must just be left to the fruit of their own ways, or to feel the weight of those chastisements which both indolence and dissipation are sure to meet with, and rightly, at the school of experience. Proclaim in their hearing, that while you wish yours to be a beneficent, you wish still more anxiously that it should be a moral administration; and that seeing the great use of money is to do good with it, it shall be one of your prime concerns, that you shan't do evil with it, by ministering to the vicious habits or propensities of those whose part it is, ere they draw on the help of others, to strive how much they can help themselves by doing their uttermost to labour diligently and live soberly. They know nothing at all of the common people, who think that they will not bear to

be told of these things; nay, that they do not look approvingly on, when they see one of their suppliant but rather ill-doing neighbours thus treated by the visitor of their district with the freedom and fidelity of an honest friend. The man who deals in this peculiar, but certainly most rational and healthful style of philanthropy, is sure to carry in full the popular conscience and sense of right along with him; and there is one way in which he might earn golden opinions, even from those whose applications he may feel it his duty to set aside. He might crave their indulgence. He might represent the other and more urgent demands upon him. He might state what the objects of general utility are which he should like to provide for, and what the cases which are greatly more helpless and destitute than their own. He might point to a poorer family beside them, with its dumb or deranged or otherwise impotent and disabled children; and make it palpable, that the less they draw upon him, the more will he have to bestow on the children of a still heavier misfortune than themselves—and so, that by their forbearance, instead of dependents upon charity, they become fellow-helpers in its cause,*—noble-hearted contributors for the relief of a poverty more abject and pitiable than any which has yet visited their own habitations. Such an appeal he will have the happiness of finding to be often irresistible; and that many under the force of it will not only forego their own complaints and claims upon his liberality, but even in the shape of positive offerings out of

* See a Sermon on Charity in Vol. XI. of my series, at p. 419.

their own scanty means will evince a willingness to be his auxiliaries in the cause of humanity, instead of being drawbacks or obstacles in his way. There is no saying how far this principle of most beautiful as well as beneficent operation could be carried downward. We are sure it could be carried so far as not only to arrest the tide but to turn it—and so as to get more from the people of our district for the purposes of benevolence, than we should be called upon to give for the relief of all the indigence that is within its borders.

13. It is of the utmost practical importance, however—essential indeed to the maintenance of his ascendancy for good amongst them—that our philanthropist should stand accredited for consistency and truth of character in the eyes of his popula tion ; and that, for this purpose, he should make full and satisfying acquittal of his Christianity in the midst of them. More particularly, if he want to preserve that moral weight, and that hold on their confidence and good opinion which form the real secret of his power, it must be his care not to incur the character of a selfish narrow close-fisted pretender to benevolence, and who belies all his professions of it, whenever he is brought to the trial, and any surrender of money is required at his hands—an impression this which even the most liberal almsgiving, if conducted, with inviolable secrecy, is not fitted to dissipate. According to the policy that we have recommended, his refusals may be greatly more manifest than his compliances ; and therefore unless it can be made to appear that there is a principle in his refusals, he may

suffer greatly in estimation—a thing to be chiefly deprecated, because he would proportionally suffer in his influence over them, and so as to bereave of all their virtue his most honest and disinterested attempts for the well-being of his families. It is therefore well that the same Bible which enjoins a secret almsgiving, also bids us make our light so shine before men that they may see our good works, not however for the sake of our own glory, but for the glory of our Father in Heaven. While then there are occasions on which the strictest concealment of our beneficence is called for, there must be occasions too on which it is desirable that it should become manifest to all men—not of course for the purpose of display, but at least for the purpose of vindication. And it is fortunate that we need be at no loss for such opportunities of well-doing as might admirably serve this latter purpose. The education of some dumb boy it may be in one or other of his families,—the promise, and that by purchase if necessary, of a place in an asylum for one of their blind—the pensioning, when there is no such asylum to receive them, of a poor cripple or idiot or in any way helpless victim of accident or disease—the generous subscription, which if it meet not the whole necessity, might lead the way to others and so enlist the charity of the little neighbourhood for the mitigation of some disaster, that, in the shape of a burning, or the fall of a crazy tenement, or the death of his horse, may have befallen one of the poorest of the householders—We say it is well that our philanthropist can in these various ways make full

proof of his liberality, and without the mischief attendant on the publicity of every scheme which is set on foot for the relief of general indigence.* And there are countless other occasions of a beneficence at once prolific of good and harmless, so as to be without alloy—and in which if he can afford it our visitor might indulge in a large-hearted munificence, which even though charged with prodigality, at least brings no corruption along with it, nay, might subserve the direct and unquestionable good of all in his locality—As in the erection and endowment of a church, or district school, or hall for a library and savings' bank and well regulated News room, where lectures too might occasionally be given, and social meetings be held free of all that can repel the attendance of the virtuous, but rather such as to invite the frequent presence of the best and wisest in the parish. A thousand other things might be specified—a well, a pavement, a sewer; if in the country a little commodious bridge for the benefit of the lieges, or the opening of a play-ground for their young, and many other sorts of liberal devices,† which would

* See my Examination before a Committee of the House of Commons, in Vol. XVI. of my series at p. 373, &c. and 377, &c.. also Vol. I. of my Political Economy, p. 419, being Vol. XIX. of my series, and most fully and particularly of all, a Sermon written in 1819, on the Example of our Saviour as a Guide to Charity, in Vol. XII. of the Series, p. 39—44. See also Vol. II. p. 128—131, of the Ch. and Ec. Pol., being Vol. XV. of the Series.

† We have one of the best examples of this in the felicitous conception of a liberal and large-hearted friend of my own, who, on a winter-day of bitter cold, sent for a glazier, and commissioned him to go along both sides of the Canongate, and replace every broken pane that he found in any of the houses—a measure by which, at the expense of a few pounds, he tempered

soon dissipate every mistake among the people as to the character and views of the humane christian and kind-hearted gentleman who had assumed the benevolent charge of them; and at the same time invest him with authority to resist and rebuke that spirit of sordidness which is sure to get up amongst them, and be fostered into greater strength of appetency every day, by a profuse and patent and indiscriminate almsgiving.

14. With these cautions, we should think that a poor district might be safe even in the hands of a rich man. In the hands of a superintendent much poorer than he, as of a decent tradesman or clerk or even well-conditioned and intelligent mechanic, we should not only feel no doubt of its safety—but firmly believe, that, out of its own home capabilities alone, he could with a management conducted on the principles that we have now explained, bring it into a state of economic independence, nay of growing comfort, so as that it should gradually rise from year to year to greater heights than before above the level of the destitution in which he found it. Yet in subjecting a whole parish to this sort of secular superintendence, we should like a mixture of all the classes of society in the agency among whom we parcelled out its various districts—with a preference most certainly in favour of the more plebeian office-bearer who resided within or near to his assigned locality, always supposing him a person of good sense as well as Christian piety. There

the pelting of the pitiless blast on the tenement of many a poor family.

are many respects in which he could acquit himself better than the wealthy patrician at a distance, who, beside being extra-parochial, is yet devoid of all experience or habits of converse with the common people. Still we desiderate a few such, though not, it is our earnest assurance to each, for the sake of his money wherewith to relieve the general indigence of their families; but for the moral effects of his presence in the midst of them, and for our desire to see a closer and kindlier amalgamation among the various ranks and orders of our commonwealth. His money in fact will make a right management in his hands an affair of altogether greater wisdom and difficulty; and instead of facilitating, as vulgar thinkers apprehend, may, if not given with care and consideration, endanger the success of his benevolent enterprise. Let him lavish it as he may on educational and medical institutes, and so as that the people under his charge may have the full benefit of both; but let there be selection and secrecy and strenuous investigation of cases in all the measures which he adopts for the relief of poverty. Its chief danger at the outset will arise from a tacit comparison in his mind between his own standard of comfort and theirs, and whence he may be precipitated into a strong and exaggerated view of the destitution or even positive wretchedness of the people. He must just take this general standard of comfort as he finds it, and never once think of the herculean attempt, an attempt which never could succeed in that way, to raise the standard by the profusion of his largesses for better

food or furniture or dress than that to which they have been habituated. It is not thus that we shall ever elevate the style or enjoyments of the common people—a consummation only to be gained by the gradual rise and refinement of their tastes, which nothing can more effectually speed forward, than—not the money of their wealthy visitor, but —his frequent converse with them, and the moralizing influence of those schools and churches, which his money might help to set a-going. We would therefore cordially invite his co-operation in this good work. We promise him a rich harvest of gratification in this precious walk of home charity; the comfort of knowing what he is about; and a perfect contrast in point of satisfaction, between the certainty of that good which is sure to spring up under a system of safe and wise ministrations conducted on a field of benevolent exertion subject to his own immediate eye, and the doubtful or with far greater likelihood the pernicious effects of a miscellaneous liberality called forth at random by applications from all points and all distances. And let him not be alarmed at the amount of time or trouble, far more formidable to his imagination than the amount of money, which it may require at his hands. We hope to satisfy him afterwards that by the sacrifice of a very few hours in the week or even in the month, he may rid his territory of all its wretched pauperism, and establish a far more kindly and beneficent system in its place. Or if this time don't satisfy himself, if he find that pleasure in the work which we have no doubt he will, he may by his various devices of liberality

be the instrument of a great progressive advancement in the habits and condition of his families. We should not wonder, though it became at length to him the most grateful, as it will be the cheapest of all his amusements—a new method opened up to him, by which to purchase the greatest enjoyment for the least money. He will doubly rejoice in it, that it is an operation twice blest—blessing him who gives and him who takes.

SECT. III.—*Supposition that the Visitor of a District enters on the walk which we have assigned to him, and appears before its population in the capacity of an Office-Bearer in the Church.*

1. BUT before we proceed further with our argument, we must remove a serious impediment in its way, from the minds of those who may be thinking all the while, that as we spoke of the people in a district being taught to help themselves, or to help each other—we presumed an aggregate sufficiency within its limits which does not exist, and so have reasoned on a nonentity. And certain it is, that when we do propose to commit an applicant for relief—either to his own economy, this should imply that he has something to save; or to his relatives, that they have something to give; or to the kindness of neighbours, that the means and materials are in their hands, wherewith to feed the hungry and clothe the naked. But is this true in fact? We have selected as the field of our enterprise a congeries of the poorest house-

holds in town, and then tell of its own capabilities for a surplus there by which a process of internal charity might be kept agoing. Now, where in the name of wonder, and of all that is incredible, is this surplus to be found? Can it have any real substantive being among these very poorest of the poor? We admit them to be possessors of the same humanity with ourselves, and as such must be subject to the working of its various laws —the law of self-preservation, and of relative affection, and of sympathy between man and man. There are hearts to feel amongst them; and we should gladly add hands to give, if, while we see the hands, we could also see as palpably where or how it is, that they can have ought to give away. We dispute not the existence of the requisite *morale* amongst them. But the *materiel* is indispensable also; and, wanting this, it is poetry and nothing more to talk of a healthful interior circulation, with its ducts of conveyance running along in fancied lines of beauty, from household to household as well as from heart to heart, or from kindred to kindred, to children and parents and sisters and brothers and uncles and as far on as to remotest cousinship. One might be made in this way to figure a system of empty tubes; but the inconceivable thing is a stream to fill them, and without this a process of home charity in such a mass of destitution is but an aerial speculation. And whence it is asked is the aliment to be had by which alone a body or a substance can be given to it; and apart from which we but listen to a dream,

or look on a gaudy picture drawn by a man of glowing imagination.

2. And yet it will be found that the imagination is all on the side of our incredulous objector. The first, the capital illusion into which they have fallen, is that there exists, in this country at least, or we could almost venture to say in the civilized world, an aggregate of two or three hundred human beings living in their own habitations and presenting to view a dead level of the alike helpless and irremediable poverty. There is no such thing. There is a gradation and an inequality everywhere. I know of magnates in the Cowgate of Edinburgh; and scarcely an assemblage of fifty contiguous tenements in the poorest region of Glasgow, where along with operatives who earned for the time but five shillings a week, there were not others intermingled who were earning from twenty to sometimes fifty shillings a week. If these our contemptuous judges, instead of reproaching others with theory, would but enter on the work of exploration and become observers themselves, they would soon find that they too had imaginations to be corrected, certain spectral notions of their own which a little experience, if they but knew how to profit by its lessons, would speedily dissipate.* But to come at once to our proof, it can, not only be grasped at conjecturally, but ascertained and stated arithmetically, how

* This I have spoken to at greater length in my work on "the Importance of a Right Moral to a Right Economical State," at p. 195—201. Vol. XX. of this Series.

much the people of any given town, or even with a sufficient approximation to the truth, how much the people of any given parish or district in it, annually expend on intoxicating liquors; and to make it more applicable for our argument, on such liquors as are used in greatest proportion by the common people. For example, Sheriff Alison of Glasgow, in his recent work on Population, calculates on certain specific data that in that town and suburbs of about 250,000 inhabitants, there is spent no less a sum on whisky than twelve hundred thousand pounds annually.* We suspect a possible, nay a likely exaggeration in his reckoning, and were ourselves in the habit, on very moderate data however, of reasoning on the consumption of a yearly half million—which in deference to the judgment of Mr Alison we shall now assume to be eight hundred thousand, or fully three pounds a-head for each unit of the population. This accords with the experience of many other places. In our Cowgate alone there are upwards of thirty public houses upheld chiefly by the demand of next-door customers, and implying a consumption of more than six thousand a year. It would keep our argument entire, though the yearly expenditure were taken at half of this sum —more especially as it seems agreed on all hands, that the consumption of spirits increases with the descent in the scale of society—so as to be proportionally far greater among the lower than among the upper or middle classes. But this is not the only article of indulgence on which the

* Alison on Population, Vol. II. p. 119

means of the people might be economized or diverted to other and better objects. We are authoritatively told of the enormous profits of pawnbrokers—amounting it is said to half a million a-year in Glasgow; and which with a little benevolent care and attention might all be committed back again to the parties from whom it had been extracted—another mighty enlargement then to the comfort and sufficiency of the common people. But there are many other items of extravagance and mismanagement beside these; and which all taken together bespeak an immense internal fund the real and rightful property of the people themselves; and which if recalled from its present useless, or even pernicious direction, would mightily conduce—not to the present comfort alone, but to the independence and future elevation of the working classes in society. The largest sum yet specified for a poor-rate in Scotland is eight hundred thousand a year, being nearly six hundred a year for each two thousand of the population. But if, instead of this relief coming to them from without, we can find no less a sum than six thousand a year amongst themselves, now squandered to their hurt but capable of being recovered for a better and happier destination—the achievement of this latter enterprise were surely a far greater boon to the families, and a truer benevolence on the part of their friends.

3. And here it may be felt, that, in thus laying open so large and worthless an expenditure, we speak harshly of the common people. To this we reply that we know of no exemption for any class

of society from honest and fearless remonstrance, when the members of it, be they few or many, call it forth, by glaring misconduct, or the degeneracy of their habits. It is not by flattery or falsehood that any cause of righteousness can be carried; and we shall never achieve a general good for the working classes, if restrained from telling them the truth or laying on our merited rebuke—whether by the dread of popular hatred, or by a sickly tenderness of feeling towards them. "Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment; thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty; but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour."* These are times which call for the intrepidity of an old prophet; and whether in dealing with high or low, it should be alike freely and alike fearlessly with both. The poor, on the one hand, must bear to be told that they do very very ill—but not without telling the rich on the other that they have done much worse. The truth is that the greatest palliation for the misconduct of the poor, for their recklessness, their ruinous squanderings, their low and loathsome dissipations, is the cruel neglect and abandonment of them by the upper ranks of society. It is chiefly in towns where the greatest moral injustice has been done to them—abandoned wholesale to ignorance and vice—dispossessed of all their moral privileges, whether in schools for their young or in churches for their general population —spoiled of their parochial inheritance which had come down from their forefathers by a griping

* Leviticus xix. 15.

magistracy who have seized on their places in the house of God, and thus made merchandise of their souls to the highest bidder—the most monstrous and, with all deference to our demagogues and political declaimers, far the worst encroachment ever made by lordly aristocrats on the rights and immunities of the people. No wonder, that, thus driven from the ordinances of the gospel and abandoned to Sabbath profanation, a general week-day profligacy should have followed in its train; and that families thus made worthless should have soon become wretched; and that filth and poverty and all moral and physical abominations should have accumulated in all plebeian quarters of the town, whose inhabitants, literally cast off by their superiors with whom they wont to have associated as fellow-worshippers in the temple of their God, have sunk beneath the level of our common humanity—with every wild and outlandish habit of gypsies, and only without their locomotion. And to stem the tide of this degeneracy, or rather, for a moral and christian reform of our people is scarcely in all their thoughts, to lay an arrest on the growing and gathering destitution which must keep pace with it—it is thought enough by many to scatter among their habitations the wretched pittances of an alms-house—As if the hurried inquiries or cursory surveillance of a few paid inspectors could reach the deeply seated mischief, which festers like a moral gangrene in the hearts and habits of the people, and can only be met by moral remedies alone. There is a more excellent way, of surer efficacy and far nobler results.

There is a sore and inveterate disease—let not the healing of it be gone about superficially. It is not a slight medicine that will suffice; nor must we think it an adequate compensation for the injury done by us to the common people, that we dole out the allowances of public charity among a few of their most conspicuous sufferers, or of those who in virtue of long neglect have sunk the lowest and sustained the greatest degradation and misery at our hands. It is not enough that we appease the cry of distress where it is loudest, or produce for ourselves a momentary respite by dealing with it in shreds and scantlings. The whole head is sick, the whole heart is sore. The malady against which we have to contend is not that of particular cases, to be treated or disposed of piecemeal and individually as they occur. It is the malady of a system—a radical and generating virus, which we have to go forth and work hard against —only to be counterworked and extirpated by a searching and sanative influence, which shall reach to the inner depths of the popular mind, and pervade the whole bulk and body of the population.

4. We have already explained how it is that even one individual might undertake for fifty families; and by what footsteps he could with the utmost facility to himself, and far greater success than many have the least notion of, so raise the habit and condition of the whole, as mightily to improve the economics of his district. It were well if this experiment were multiplied by the spontaneous enterprises of the benevolent; and that too in all various localities—more especially where the

poverty was most extreme; and the population, both in character and circumstances, were the most unpromising and unlikely. The result, and were the right methods taken and persevered in we can have no doubt of its prosperity, would furnish a body of experience and experience too at first hand—which might at length open the eyes of the most incredulous to the only solution of a problem, that has hitherto exercised and baffled the ingenuity of many speculators—especially those most egregious of all speculators, who, under the title of practical men and with a professed abjuration of all theory, have precipitated a legislation that traverses all the lights of history, and all the laws and tendencies of that nature which God hath given to us.

5. What a single philanthropist could do on a small, a single church with its parish of two thousand people, and there ought never to be more even in towns, might do on a larger scale. And this were no novelty in Scotland. It would be a recurrence in fact to the practice and usage of the olden time—when each church had a distinct body of office-bearers, whose special duty it was to manage for the relief of the poor. These were the deacons* of other days, who laboured in their more secular vocation apart from the elders whose higher office it was to minister in holy things, and be the spiritual assistants of the clergyman, in caring for the souls of the people. Such a parish, if divided into six or ten parts, would furnish the very objects and occupations which we have been

* See the First and Second Books of Discipline.

employed in describing, to as many members of the congregation. Our visitor of whom we have hitherto supposed that he worked on his own account, or for the gratification of his own taste and benevolence, now becomes the functionary or office-bearer of a church. He appears in a new character before the eyes of the people—clothed in that certain authority, which ever stands associated in the imaginations of men, with the place which one holds in any corporate system of management that is sanctioned by law; and more especially if it receive the designation of a court, whether civil or ecclesiastical. The very title which he now wears makes him a different person from before; and at all events, he is now in different circumstances, which might either be of favourable or adverse operation, depending on the style and policy of his administration. What these new circumstances are, and what the consequent policy or peculiar conduct and method of acting is which they demand of him, we now proceed to explain.

6. There is one very obvious respect in which a parish deacon differs from a private volunteer in the work of benevolence. We have spoken of the secrecy wherewith the latter should conduct his alms-giving; and that this ought not to be his ostensible, not even his chief errand, when he goes forth among the householders of his district. But a deacon has no choice in this particular. By office and designation he stands out as the dispenser of the alms of the church. This is his known business; and he cannot though he would

disguise it, whatever the sordid or mercenary expectations might be which the very sight of him shall awaken, either among the poorer or more worthless families of his charge. His therefore is a position of all the greater difficulty; and yet it is a difficulty far from insuperable—nay which might be more than countervailed by other influences not at the command of the spontaneous and unofficial philanthropist.

7. Let him therefore make no mystery of his profession as administrator of the church alms among the families of his district; but openly proclaim the system on which he means to acquit himself of its duties. Let there be a full understanding on this matter between him and them; and he will feel no difficulty in soon carrying the consent and approval of his little community, as well as their intelligence along with him. Every thing must at length command the willing homage and concurrence of a population which has a basis of right to rest upon. He will speedily enlist their consciences upon his side; and once that this is done, he will feel no difficulty in carrying his views into effect. The people themselves will prove his best auxiliaries; and that too with a help so powerful and so productive, as to astonish even himself—when he comes to perceive how smoothly and prosperously, and at how moderate a *public* expense withal, he can meet and dispose as he ought of all the real and thoroughly ascertained necessities on account of which application has been made to him. It is true that he stands out amongst them in the known capacity of an almoner;

and this forms one great distinction between the deacon and the visitor—exposing him it may be thought to a greater force and frequency of applications. And it is also true that what is thus sought, will, if granted, be not at his own personal expense; and so he loses the protection of a certain delicacy, which only they who are profoundly ignorant of the common people give them no credit for. But along with this certain delicacy there is a certain sense of dignity too; and which is capable of being fostered into a strong repugnance to aught like a visible dependence on the ministrations of a poor's fund. It is furthermore true, that the popular imagination of this fund is often greatly beyond its real amount; but even this false arithmetic can be rectified by explanation. In a word, let there be a full and friendly communion between the deacon and his families, and a common feeling between him and them will speedily be the result of it. He will find that by frequent household intercourse, or in the bland and intimate converse of private acquaintanceship, the people are vastly more pliant and malleable, as if of different temper altogether, than when sisted before the tribunal and called to take a part in the argumentations of a parish vestry—often fierce and insolent, and charged as in angry litigation with the spirit of mutual disdain and defiance. In the amenities of social companionship at their own houses, he will breathe amongst them a far milder yet clearer atmosphere—for as the fruit of his nearer and narrower inspection, his will be a tenfold more thorough knowledge and discernment of

every particular case, than is at all attainable by the formal inquiries, and columnar specifications, set forth with goodly order and array in the schedules of public charity—the administrators of which, albeit they think not so, have a greatly more superficial acquaintance with the subject of their unwieldy management, than the visitor of a little district, even after he has become a deacon, and so is transformed into an official personage like themselves. In very truth, there is from the place where they sit a wide gulf, a mighty distance between them and the population—and this too filled by a medium not only cold and unkindly, but dark and often turbid, so as both to obscure and distort their vision—a disadvantage this which they cannot repair or get the better of—even with the help of their inspectors, whose office it is to radiate across the interval and reconnoitre the case and circumstances of every applicant, and bring their formulary of particulars, all in right place and arrangement back again. With all their pains and all their possible regulations, let us assure these administrators of charity for a whole city, that they will never reach not even approximate to our deacon, in that minute and thorough intelligence of every case which his frequent visits, and the constantly growing familiarity of months perhaps years with the families of his own little vineyard, enable him to acquire—far less in the tact and adaptation and flexibility wherewith he can fit himself, precisely as is best in the ever varying circumstances, to the necessities and the condition of every new applicant. The starch uniformity of procedure which

is characteristic, because unavoidable, in the affairs of a large superintendence, does not and cannot admit of those manifold adjustments to each individual peculiarity, which the member of a small parochial court, within the limits of his own subdivision, can so easily practise, in the exercise of a discretion becoming sounder with the experience of every day—who, on the other hand, will be delighted to find, that what looks so formidable in the bulk, and when seen from a distance, vanishes like any other bugbear, when we enter upon immediate contact with it; and that when encountered by littles, or in separate and small enough localities, it indeed becomes a very facile and practicable affair

8. But let us descend more into particulars. And first let it be a settled maxim, that, while every case of want and suffering must be attended to, of all the expedients for its relief it shall come the last, and only be resorted to after that all the other and better expedients have failed—to provide for it from the poor's money of the parish. This should in every instance of mere poverty be looked on as the "dernier ressort"—a sort of necessary evil, which one submits to because he cannot otherwise help it, and not till every right method has failed by which to anticipate and avoid it. What the shifts are which ought to be tried, ere the descent is made, or the name of the applicant goes down on the list of dependents on the public charity, we have already in part explained. First, having ascertained a destitution, if possible to stimulate the industry of the applicant, and see what more

he might earn—Second, or to improve his economy, and see what the things are upon which he might save—Thirdly, to seek after his relatives, and see what they will give—Fourthly, to make the case known among neighbours, and see whether the necessity might not be got over by one joint effort of liberality; or even whether there is not a willingness amongst them, to keep off for an indefinite time the stigma of pauperism from one, who is so far a favourite throughout his little vicinity that hearts and hands may yet be open to him. It is not known how effectual these shifts might be made, how prolific of relief are these natural and spontaneous resources—all of which ought certainly to be attempted and drawn upon, ere the case shall be suffered to appear in court, or submitted to the board of parochial administrators. It should be the distinct aim of each deacon to provide for the wants of his district in a more excellent way, and so as to intercept if he can every application before it reaches the door of the parish vestry. That deacon in fact, does his duty best, who gives his court of deacons the least to do. Such ought to be the reigning principle, the *esprit de corps*, among the members of the body. And what is better still, it were a possible nay an easy thing, for each deacon to awaken an *esprit de corps* akin to this, among the families of his own district or his own deaconry—insomuch that each might collectively feel it as their distinction and their glory, to have few or even no paupers within their borders —and either because the hands of all have ministered to their own necessities, or because through the

ready and generous help of all, every child of misfortune in the midst of them has been saved from the humiliations of public charity. Whatever quadrates with the natural conscience, can practically be carried or made to take effect in any community; and more especially if enforced and exemplified by him who is vested with an official direction over it. It speaks so home to their own sense of right, that each man should work and save for himself rather than be burdensome to others, and that relatives and neighbours should be helpful to each other—as to make it impossible for any management founded on these principles to be either unpopular, or to fail in the accomplishment of its own high and virtuous objects. And there is one advantage which the deacon has over the visitor, when labouring to dispose of any case or application in the way that we recommend. The money thereby saved is not saved to himself—it is only saved to the poor's fund of which he is the guardian and the administrator. His proceedings do not expose him to the suspicion of his own personal avarice. Nay he may at any time repel, even reverse this suspicion, by taking the ostensible lead in any joint enterprise of good either for his district at large, or for some one of its more unfortunate families. It is incalculable how few and how light the cheap and simple attentions are, by which any deacon, if but a creditable and companionable man, might carry the fellow-feeling and confidence of all along with him.

9. But there is still another advantage which the deacon has over the visitor. His walk is dis-

tinct from that of the clergyman or elder; but still in that walk, he is the office-bearer and so the representative of a church—in which capacity it not only becomes him, but he will speak with all the greater authority, when, called to the work of argument with his people and sometimes of remonstrance or rebuke, he deals forth among them the sacred lessons of the gospel. It is peculiarly his part to yield at all times an incorrupt moral testimony—nor ever to flinch, when the occasion requires that he should act as the fearless reprover of their indolence, or their vicious habits, or their beggarly meanness of spirit; or, if able, but unwilling to interpose in behalf of some helpless relative, to lift his indignant protest against the unfeeling selfishness that is shut to the distress or degradation even of one's own kindred, of those who are flesh of his own flesh and bone of his own bone. It is not to be endured that we should have to succumb to the clamours or even to the claims of alleged want, when they can be clearly made out to be the claims of worthlessness, which should ever be met, not by a different testimony alone but a different treatment, from that bestowed on those deserving poor whom it is both the duty and delight of all who feel as they ought to sympathize with and succour to the uttermost. Let these be cherished and cared for with all liberality and tenderness, while the others are kept at bay—and so as to make it manifest that the regimen of our parochial charity is at the same time a regimen of virtue. They utterly mistake the common people who apprehend of this style of administration that it must be un-

popular. In the long run it will be quite the reverse. It will find an echo in their own consciences. They will know how to discriminate between on the one hand an injurious harshness, and on the other the firm and consistent procedure of him, who, armed with intrepidity and force of principle, acquits himself in the midst of them as the declared enemy of imposture and worthlessness. Such a man will be sure to elevate the tone of his families, and to enlist them upon his side; and though his should be one of the poorest districts in town, even he himself will be astonished at the number of months perhaps of years which may elapse ere the necessity lies upon him, of making a single draught on the parish fund for the relief of any of his people.

10. For prior to this, and even after he has found the stimulated industry and economy of the applicant, and the stimulated duty of his relatives, and the stimulated sympathy of his neighbours, to be all inadequate for the necessities of the case—there still remains another expedient, which we mention the last because really the least in the order of importance; and of which we should never wish to avail ourselves, save on the tried and found insufficiency of all the previous expedients, each of which we hold preferable to the one that we are now to propose, though it again be preferable to the final and conclusive step in the series—we mean the entry of a new and another name or person on the lists of the public and parochial charity. As the last, if it should be the only remaining effort to save him from this,

we recommend that his circumstances should be made known to one or more wealthy friends, though not of the parish, who, whether by a small and regular pension, or by a single gratuity, might interpose for the rescue of some struggling family from the fall of their visible descent on a platform humbler than any which they have yet occupied—we mean that of a recorded pauperism. And in the great bulk of instances, this, we affirm can be done with a facility that is quite marvellous—often by a timely guinea or half guinea given but once, say to help out a deficient rent or meet some other occasion of embarrassment, through which if the applicant be carried and so as to weather it for the coming week or fortnight, you may never hear afterwards or at least for years of the necessities or hardships of his condition—thereby warding off a permanent burden from the poor's fund; and what is of far more importance, warding off a permanent deterioration of habit and principle from the man himself, who starts anew on the walk of industry and honest independence. We should indeed wonder if in any well-managed parish, after the full introduction and establishment of our system—half-a-dozen such examples of a resort to gentlemen for some slight pecuniary aid were required or called for in the course of a twelvemonth. And when we compare the small number of such cases, with the great number of such gentlemen in every large town, all most liberally disposed for the public good, if they but knew how to go about it—we, in the name of public virtue and of the people's best interests, would put the

question—whether it is not better that our domestic and parochial treatment of the poor should not first be tried and have full experimental justice done to it, ere Scotland shall be precipitated into that economy of general and legalized pauperism, which cannot fulfil its own promises without beggaring the whole population; and cannot regulate or restrain its allowances, without mocking the expectations which itself had awakened; and so by placing the two great divisions of society, the payers and receivers in hostile array against each other, spreading dissatisfaction, even to the danger of tumults and popular outbreaks, all over the land.

11. And it were further well, if what we have recommended as the last step in favour of the applicant, before his case is submitted to the parochial court, should, in every fit instance, be *their* first step; and so as to precede, nay if possible to prevent, the introduction of his name into their record, as forming one of the regular paupers on the roll. When any application must be deferred to, it is good policy to consider—whether it may not be treated as a casualty to be provided for by a single donation, and recorded under the general head of casualties, without the name of the person who is relieved by it. The spirit that shrinks from such an exposure ought to be upheld as long as possible; and we again repeat with all confidence, that the deacon who acts on such a system will be astonished to find at the end of the year, with what perfect facility and cheapness he can dispose of all his cases, even the most seemingly formidable amongst them. That bugbear,

which looks a gigantic hydra, when seen in the bulk or from a distance, vanishes into nothing, when dealt with at close quarters, or piecemeal, and in small separate sections. We ourselves should not marvel, though under such a regimen, not one farthing was drawn for years from the parish fund for the relief of mere indigence; and it is our firm unbroken confidence that the smallest public fund of the poorest parish in Scotland, would in ordinary times form a sufficient landing place for every application that could not be otherwise and better disposed of, than by an allowance from either a kirk-session or a charity workhouse. And we count on such a result.—First, because we look for a resuscitation and increase of private charity, as the sure effect of every abridgment in the legal or visible displays of it; and, secondly, because we look to the dormant capabilities of the people themselves, by which a wise and experienced deaconship could indefinitely raise the standard both of comfort and character, throughout the community at large.

12. And to obtain the services of such a deaconship, we have only to repair a breach which has been made in the original constitution of the Church of Scotland—to replace a dilapidation which its venerable fabric has suffered in the course of ages. The framers of our ecclesiastical polity, those wisest and most enlightened of all modern reformers, who knew well how to discriminate things secular from sacred, and how best to provide for both—they instituted a special and distinct order, whose office it should be to look after

the collection and distribution of all the needful temporalities, whether for the maintenance of churches and schools or for the relief and sustenance of the poor.* A national provision for the first objects has so far superseded the necessity for the former of these services, save in those

* The Fifth Head of the First Book of Discipline, treats of the provision for ministers, and distribution of the rents and possessions justly belonging to the church. The elders and deacons had the superintendance in this matter. Under the Sixth Head, which treats of the rents and patrimony of the church, it is said —"We require the deacons and treasurers rather to receive the rents, than the ministers themselves, because that off the teinds not only must the ministers be sustained, but also the poor and schools." To these purposes deacons were appointed. The deacons were under the control of the ministers and elders.

The second chapter of the Second Book of Discipline treats of the policy of the kirk and persons and office-bearers to whom the administration is committed.—"The whole policy of the kirk consists of three things, doctrine, discipline and distribution." Hence "ariseth a sort of threefold office-bearers in the kirk, viz. of ministers, preachers—elders, governors—and deacons, distributors." "There is in the New Testament times of the Evangel, the ministry of the apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and doctors in the administration of the word; the eldership for the order and administration of the discipline; the deaconship to have the care of the ecclesiastical goods." "There are four ordinary functions or offices in the kirk of God—the office of pastor, minister, or bishop—the doctor—presbyter or elder—and the deacon." The eighth chapter treats of the deacons and their office, the last ordinary function in the church. "To whom the administration of the alms of the faithful, and ecclesiastical goods do belong." "The office of the deacon is an ordinary and perpetual ecclesiastical function in the kirk of Christ." After enumerating the destinations of the church patrimony, it proceeds—"We add hereto the schools and schoolmasters also." The tenth chapter is entituled—"Certain special heads of reformation which we crave." One of these heads of reformation is—"We desire therefore the ecclesiastical goods to be uplifted and distributed faithfully to whom they appertain, and that by the ministry of the deacons—to whose office properly, the collection and distribution thereof belongs, that the poor may be answered of their portion thereof, and they of the ministry live without care and solicitude, as also the rest of the treasury of the kirk may be received and bestowed to their right uses."

towns and parishes where church or school extension is required; and whenever the order shall come to be revived, the best methods by which a further provision might be obtained for these great public blessings, would fall most appropriately under the cognizance and care of the newly set up deacons in our modern day. On the other hand, the latter of these services, the official management of the poor, should be all their care —when by the few simple steps which we have tried to explain, they will find that what they have to give as office-bearers, might be indefinitely lessened by the working of those natural principles which only require being appealed to and guided to right objects, that each parochial community might be brought to the best economic state of which it is capable. We know of no other expedient for the right solution of this great problem. We have no faith in a national board that undertakes for the pauperism of a whole empire, or in a provincial board that undertakes for the pauperism of a whole county, or in a city board that undertakes for the pauperism of a whole township, or in a union with its arrangements however skilful for the pauperism of a whole cluster of parishes. But with all our helplessness in these, we have the greatest confidence in the perfect facility and success wherewith every deacon possessed of kindly feelings and common sense could manage aright the pauperism of fifty families; and on this stepping-stone, not by adventuring on what is new but by a simple recurrence to what is old—we mean by a system of deaconship, comprising six

or eight or ten members, we can see our way to a right economy of pauperism for a whole parish. We shall not meddle with matters too high for us; nor do we profess to understand by what mechanism it is, that one body of general administration and surveillance can achieve aught so magnificent, as the right apportionment of relief for all the manifold varieties of want and wretchedness in the thousand homes that lie scattered in a territory, where tens of thousands of human beings are congregated—whether in large cities or extended provinces. But we do understand, how an intelligent and well-principled man can, in a given locality, of some few hundred people, so operate on the springs or principles of human feeling and human action, as to maintain in that economic condition which is the best possible all the families who are within its confines. We do not know what the one process is by which the result universal can be reached, of a right economy of pauperism for the millions of a whole nation. But we do know what the one process is by which the result particular can be reached, of a right economy of pauperism for the as many scores or fifties of a whole district. And as we have somewhere said already, our result universal is arrived at by the summation of these particulars. Give us a sufficient number of deaconries for each parish, and a sufficient number of parishes for an empire; and by the cheap and simple attentions of as many men, each performing a most light and practicable task within his own little sphere, shall we make good piecemeal and in items, the full accom-

plishment of that object, which dealt with as an unwieldy whole, has hitherto exercised and baffled the ingenuity of all our statesmen.

13. In nothing have the fathers of the Scottish church evinced a profounder discernment of our nature, than in the separation which they made between the deaconship and the eldership—assigning respectively the duties of each to two distinct classes of functionaries. It is true that in so doing they acted on their own views of the scriptural model as set before us more particularly in the Acts of the Apostles; but it is furthermore evident that they also saw the fitness of the separation, and that too on the principle sanctioned by the Saviour Himself, when, on being applied for to arbitrate and decide in a matter of secular interest, He replied "Who made me a judge and a divider over you?" The truth is, that though the duties of the deaconship have now in practice been generally merged into those of the eldership —the two together make the most incongruous of all pluralities. We can only afford one or two brief sentences for the explanation of what that is wherein the incongruity lies.* For a right acquittal of the deaconship there ought to be a wholesome rigour of investigation in every case that is brought before the secular functionary, and also a wholesome rigour of treatment when the worthless and undeserving come forth to urge in our hearing their necessities or their claims. But the spiritual

* Dr Miller on the Office of a Ruling Elder, Chap. X. p. 181 —also the Christian and Economic Polity of a Nation, Vol. I. Chap. VII. p. 256—267, being Vol. XIV. of the series.

functionary, the elder, whose office it is to deal with the people in things spiritual, should never thus be brought into conflict with them, on any question which relates to their merely secular interests and concerns. It is not for elders, if they wish to maintain their ecclesiastical character, or to preserve their ecclesiastical usefulness among the families—it is not for the elders, and far less for the clergyman, to be implicated with a management, in which the exhibition of a quality so alienating and unpopular as that of rigour, is at all called for—we mean, of course, not the rigour of church discipline, but the rigour which first scrutinizes, and then when it finds cause withstands, the solicitations of *alleged* poverty for a share in church allowances, or, as they have been sometimes termed, in the charities of the faithful. Such an exhibition on their part must create at least a strong initial barrier in the way of any good effect, from their spiritual ministrations; and if for the purpose of removing this barrier—while still having to do with the administration of the poor's money—they choose to make an opposite exhibition, to substitute facility in place of rigour, to be yielding and blindly profuse in the style of their dispensations—then from another quarter comes there a vitiating blight on that christian and moralizing influence which should ever be kept intact and unviolated in their hands. The people are thus tempted to make a gain of godliness; to play the hypocrite with the man who thus deals at one and the same time in prayers and payments; to chime in with the spiritual for

the sake of a readier admittance into the benefits of the temporal ministration; and so altogether to lose that singleness of eye which is so essential to the clearness of one's christian intelligence,* as well as to the simplicity and godly sincerity of his christian character. It were infinitely better that such a contest of adverse and heterogeneous influences should be conclusively put an end to; and for this purpose, or to maintain in its own full and proper weight the moral ascendancy both of ministers and elders, it is truly most desirable, that any *official* management of pauperism should be altogether out of their hands—Yet not therefore out of the hands of the church's office-bearers; but placed, as far as all personal dealing with the applicants is concerned, entirely and exclusively with the deacons composing another and a distinct class of functionaries. The elders for obvious reasons, which we have elsewhere stated at length, ought never, we mean officially, to descend among things secular. But there is no necessary or permanent obstacle in the way of deacons ascending to things spiritual.† The barrier of which we have spoken may only be temporary, and in the course of experience, will, under the right acquittal of the duties of the office, at length give way. The families perhaps revolted at the first by a certain sternness of administration, will at last dis-

* Matt. vi. 22, 23.

† See Dr Miller where above quoted on the argument that the seven of whose appointment we read in the 6th chapter of the Acts were the first deacons of the christian church; and then see the 10th verse of that chapter for the competency of deacons to minister and be of use in things spiritual.

cover both its moral tendencies, and the moral principle in which it originates; and after the deacon has made full manifestation of himself, as the substantial friend of the poor, while the unfaltering enemy of their vices and the consistent patron of truth and sobriety and all righteousness in the midst of them, will then speak influentially and with an authoritative voice when he presses home upon them the lessons of the gospel. The truth is that if a christian man, he is in the best possible school for the qualifications of a higher christian office than the one which he at present occupies. It is thus that the court of deacons might become the best and most prolific nursery from which to supply the vacancies, or still further extend the court of elders—in beautiful accordance with the apostolic saying, that "they who have used the office of a deacon well, purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus."

14. But in conclusion we must not omit to mention the vast importance to a deacon, should he have a taste and ability for the services which in our second section we have recommended to the private or voluntary philanthropist. If he but give himself up to the general good of his district, and take an interest in all that can advance the health and the education and the moral well-being and the economic improvement of its families, he will soon annihilate, not its poverty it may be, but at least its pauperism. The poverty may still exist, but it will be met and mitigated in a far kindlier way than by the ministrations of public

charity. The people themselves will at length take it off his hands; and his friendly attentions, in the various ways that we have pointed out, will earn for him such a confidence and ascendency in the midst of them,—that his official dispensations will be well nigh superseded by their own thrift and good management on the one hand; and, on the other, when unavoidable misfortune has made inroad upon any of the households, by the timely forthgivings of aid and sympathy from that neighbourhood, within which all the bland and beneficent habits of a village economy have been fostered and grown up under his care.

Section IV.—*Narrative of Eighteen Years' Experience in the Parish of St John's, Glasgow.*

1. It may be thought that hitherto our arguments have been altogether of an hypothetical character; or that, as yet, we have only reasoned on the assumptions of theory, and not on the findings of experience. This is not exactly true. The principles on which we found the anticipations that we have expressed of a certain desirable result, from a certain procedure that we have ventured to recommend, are not so many assumptions, but so many general facts, denominated laws no doubt because of their generality—laws of human nature; but still accredited as facts, and throughout the whole extent too of this generality, by daily and innumerable observations. It is essential to the validity

of our inference, that it be true—first, that very generally men will work or save rather than starve; second, that generally relatives will help those of their own kindred rather than see them starve; third, that pretty generally too neighbours when told of the distress of a family within a few steps of them, will lend a hand to any generous proposal which might be set on foot for relieving them; and fourthly, should all these expedients fail, that many very many are the gentlemen, especially in or about towns, who would most gladly meet by their handsome donations any urgent or crying necessity which has been brought authentically to their knowledge. These surely are not assumptions, but general facts, each resting on a basis of manifold experience. When reasoning on the strength of the law of self-preservation, or the law of relative affection, or the law of sympathy between man and man—there may be a flaw in our deductive process, but certainly no flaw in the premises of our argument, which are of the same firm and experimental texture with the basis of all inductive sciences. The senseless outcry of those who repudiate all theory, confounding it with hypothesis, and who profess that they have no value for aught but experience, and will therefore listen to nothing else—just demonstrates that this said experience would be of no use to them even though they had it—for no sooner turned to its legitimate application, than it gets beyond their sight and comprehension altogether—unable as they are to discriminate between the generalities of actually ascertained phenomena, and the generalities of

unauthorized speculation. They will keep by experience so long as she confines herself to the office of a collector, but abandon her when she becomes a classifier: And still more, when, rising to the higher functions of a school-mistress, she gives forth no other utterance than what is prompted by the wisdom of history and the wisdom of observation—will these chance-medley statists, whose only delight is in the accumulation not in the right distribution or direction of their stores, prove how incapable they are of profiting by her lessons.

2. Yet there is one demand which all men have a right to insist upon. However firmly our anticipations may rest on certain generalities, and these of the surest and soundest description as verified by the experience of ages—still what is true in the general must be true in every particular case which is fully and fairly included in it; or, in other words, what is true in the abstract must be true also in the concrete: And, should the opportunity ever come within our reach, we are bound, in confirmation of any doctrine propounded by us in the hearing of all men, to place before their eyes the actual and living exemplification of it. We have had the good fortune to be favoured with such an opportunity. The experiment that we were permitted to make was made in such adverse circumstances, that we have ever regarded it as an *experimentum crucis;* and therefore on its actual and triumphant success do we feel ourselves entitled to found an *argumentum a fortiori.* It was strongly resisted at the outset, vilified and maligned throughout the progress of it,

and still after its fulfilment most grievously misinterpreted and misunderstood. Notwithstanding these discouragements, however, we still persevere in our appeal to it, as being in truth demonstrative of the principle and philosophy of the whole problem—persuaded as we are, that, should the public ever be at leisure to give their close and candid attention to us, we shall obtain a favourable verdict at their hands; and persuaded further, such is our confidence in the uniformity of human nature, that, should all obstructions be cleared away for a repetition of the same experiment, it would, if fairly conducted and carried out, land in the same result all the world over.

3. But it will be right to explain what these obstructions are. They do not lie between the commencement of the experiment after it is fairly set agoing, and the termination of it. They are met with and encountered and have to be overcome previous to its commencement. They do not lie in our way to the final success of the experiment when once set afloat. They lie in the way of a permission to make the experiment at all. The difficulty does not consist in making out to do the thing. The difficulty consists in making it out that we shall be allowed to do the thing. And it lies with the men in place and in power, with the functionaries or the officials of that system which is already established, either to give or to withhold this allowance. Our whole contest was with them, and never with the population—with the quondam managers of the poor, not with the poor themselves. I was successively the minister

of two parishes in Glasgow—four years minister of the first, and somewhat more than four years minister of the second. In the former, or Tron-church parish, the public aliment given to the poor was made up partly of a fund raised by legal or compulsory assessment, and partly of a fund raised by voluntary collections at the church-doors. In the latter or St John's-church parish, we stipulated for a separate and independent management of our own collections; and undertook in return, that we should send no more paupers to the fund by assessment—but that we should provide for every new applicant, with no other public aliment at our disposal than the collections alone. We succeeded in extricating the one fund from the other; or rather we succeeded in extricating our own parish from the general system of administration for the poor of the city at large; and our whole struggle or difficulty lay in effecting that extrication. For the accomplishment of this we had to obtain the consent, or prevail over the resistance of different parties. The newly formed parish of St John's was at that time but one of the nine parishes in Glasgow, all whose collections according to the actual system behoved to be thrown into one general fund, and distributed by one body of management for the whole. It was no easy matter to break up this combination, or even to detach from it but one of its members. For the accomplishment of this I had to obtain the consent, and what greatly enhances the difficulty, the *corporate* consent of so many and such different parties. I had the good fortune, from a rare

conjunction of circumstances, to secure at the outset of my connexion with St John's parish, the countenance of the magistrates for the time being on our proposed experiment. But, over and above this, I had to deal with an adverse General Session, and an adverse Town Hospital, and if not an adverse Presbytery what was just as troublesome, some adverse members of it who summoned me to a public defence of my enterprise at the bar of their inferior church judicatory, and then carried the cause by appeal to the General Assembly or supreme ecclesiastical court where I had also to appear, and from whom, but not till after much and strenuous argumentation, I obtained the privilege of being let alone. We state these things, because we hold it all important to the principle and philosophy of this question, that the distinction be clearly apprehended between the political and the natural, or to express it otherwise, between the factitious and the inherent difficulties which lie in the solution of it. We repeat that our only contest was with the former, and never with the latter difficulties—and that when, instead of the old managers for the poor, we had but the poor themselves to deal with, all went on smoothly and prosperously. The first warfare with the old established notions on the subject of poverty was far more arduous, than the second warfare with the poverty itself. To proceed and be successful in our actual treatment of the poor, after the matter was once set for us on the footing of things as we felt they ought to be—was a perfect bagatelle in point of lightness and facility, when compared to

the severe encounter that we had with the prejudices, even the passions of those, whose fond and rooted partialities were on the footing of things as they are. In one brief sentence, our great our only struggle in this enterprise was with the patricians, never with the plebeians of the commonwealth. And we urge this consideration with the greater earnestness, because we believe our own experience will prove to be the experience of all who shall attempt to reform and remodel the pauperism, whether of separate parishes or of the country at large. The great struggle is not with the essential difficulties of the problem itself—but with the prejudices of those from whom we must have permission and a free space ere we can attempt the solution of it—as the heritors and kirk-sessions of rural parishes—or the magistrates and various corporate bodies in towns: Or finally, and if our aim be not a local but universal reform, the weighty or well nigh hopeless achievement must first be carried, of gaining over or at least neutralizing the constituencies and county meetings of more than half the empire, and this as but a preliminary to the positive sanction and support of more than half the legislature. But we are supposing that a nation is to cast off its abuses in the progress of light and by a pacific series of changes. Whereas the far greater likelihood is, that, in the conflict both of interests and opinions, the evils of our social condition will remain unredressed; and vital disease will every year become more inveterate, till deeply and irremovably seated in the heart of the commonwealth; and the elements of

a coming anarchy will at length ripen for the explosion and overthrow of all old institutions, whether sound or faulty; and then on the thus desolated void, these may chance to be replaced by new ones—when another Code Napoleon shall, not by argument but power, obtain the unquestioned sway over the destinies of a now passive and sorely chastened population. It may so happen that he who is strongest in battle shall also prove the wisest in legislation, and thus the law of a compulsory provision for indigence might come to be cancelled from the statute-book by the hand of power—when the men of a new age, living in a new era, will be astonished at the perverseness and pertinacity of former days—in the experience they shall then have of the perfect fulness and facility, wherewith the charity of law is replaced by the charity both of principle and nature.*

4. To give a full narrative of our proceedings for the management of the pauperism in the parish of St John's, we should have to engross in this place the various publications on this subject of some twenty years ago.† But to these we shall merely refer, and with all possible brevity describe anew our process and the results of it.

5. The population of our parish, the most

* See Vol. I. p. 371, of the Christian and Economic Polity of a Nation, being Vol. XIV. of the series.

† Speech with its appendix before the General Assembly of May 1822 on the subject, to be found in Vol. III. p. 145, of the Christian and Economic Polity of a Nation, being Vol. XVI. of the series—Statement of Eight Years' Experience of the Pauperism of Glasgow—Evidence before the Committee of the House of Commons in 1830—These tracts are all contained within the same volume.

eastern in Glasgow, when we first undertook the charge of it in September 1819, was 10,304; and since that time, from the multitude of new houses in the large vacant spaces not yet nearly filled up of that part of the royalty, must have increased to at least somewhere about 14,000. From two decisive criteria, both of them verified by Mr Cleland—that is its smallest number of household servants, and its smallest proportion of the general assessment, it was and is still the poorest as well as most populous parish in the city. The expenditure on the poor of Glasgow fluctuates of course from year to year, but had at times exceeded £14,000 annually previous to our connexion with St John's, from which we may conclude what the charges of its pauperism might have amounted to under the general system and with an average style of management.

6. The expense of part of its existing pauperism, as well as the whole expense of whatever new pauperism might afterwards be formed, we undertook to meet and to provide for from the produce of our church-door collections alone. These had during my four years' incumbency in another parish averaged about £400 in the year. With this yearly sum, subject of course to variations whether of increase or diminution, I agreed to meet the applications of every future claimant for parochial relief, beside the immediate outlay of £225 annually on so much of the actual pauperism that had been already formed—this happening at the time to be the sum of all the allowances then made to our sessional poor. There was thus the surrender of

£175 a-year into my hands on the part of the Town Hospital, the great central institute for the pauperism of all Glasgow, but for which I undertook on certain understood conditions to protect its managers from the influx of all the new pauperism which might arise in our part of the city, or to send them no new cases from the parish of St John's.

7. These conditions were three. 1. That in those rarely occurring seasons of depression or distress, which called forth measures of relief for the whole of Glasgow additional to the common and established methods of supply, such as a general subscription to eke out defective wages or obtain employment for operatives out of work, our parish should participate in the benefit of these—it being deemed enough for deciding the question between the systems of legal and spontaneous charity, that we should be left to provide for our own necessities from our own peculiar resources in *ordinary times;* and this was all the more reasonable, that the charity which makes these occasional stretches in periods of scarcity or commercial embarrassment is entirely spontaneous. 2. That we should be protected from the expense of those paupers who should come in upon us from other parts of the city, taking care that in general Glasgow should be alike protected from the expense of our paupers should they leave us to reside in any of its other parishes. 3. That when those paupers of St John's who at the outset of our enterprise received direct supplies from the Town Hospital, should have either died off, or ceased in any other way to

be chargeable on that institution, our parish when thus no longer burdensome on the compulsory fund should be exempted from the assessment; or, in other words, should cease contributing to what it ceased to draw from—a most advantageous bargain truly for the administrators of the old system with the poorest parish in the city. None of these conditions were implemented. We ourselves forbore the first of them—for in 1820, under one of the most trying visitations which Glasgow ever experienced, when an immense central soup-kitchen was set up for the whole city, we set up a miniature soup-kitchen for our own people; and if beside this extraordinary supply any of the money raised by general subscription, and that for general distribution, reached any of the families in St John's—it must have been in a few rare instances which escaped the vigilance of our own deacons, intent as we all were on weathering even this most adverse crisis in our history by independent efforts of our own.* Thus much for our first condition. The second and third were never even by approximation made good to us.

8. But when we speak of conditions, let it not be supposed that we charge any party in this negotiation, with the violation of aught like fixed or express articles of agreement. The three articles now specified were understandings rather than conditions.† The third must at once recommend

* See statement of Eight Years' Experience in the volume referred to, p. 223.

† See my Letter to the Lord Provost of Glasgow of August 3d, 1819, previous to my entrance on St John's—where it will be observed that there is no express reference to the third condition,

its own equity to the reader. And it is of great importance that he should attend to the second —as proving what our apprehension was when we entered on the execution of our task—not that we should drive the poor out of St John's by the rigour of our administration, but that the poor from other parts of Glasgow would flock into it because of its more genial spirit and character, and so as to make us stand in dread of its inconvenient popularity. We therefore felt the importance of these different precautions, and gave warning of them beforehand, but without insisting on an absolute engagement for their being carried into effect. The truth is that placed as we were in the midst of jealous adversaries, we were fearful lest the arrangement should be frustrated, did we hold out too strenuously on these preliminary exactions. We were anxious to begin, confident of a prosperous issue; and hopeful, that, after the full exhibition of our success—all further opposition to our management would cease, and every facility be granted in order to perpetuate and extend it.

9. For let it well be remarked that our own expectations, so far from being at one, were in utter dissonance and contrariety from the general expectations whether of the public or of public men in Glasgow. By very many our scheme was viewed with an hostility which proved to be relentless and persevering. And by many more, who looked to it with good-natured complacency, it was regarded as at best an airy perhaps a beautiful idealism—

the necessity for this being I felt superseded by its obvious equity. In the same Vol. p. 314.

the fond and sanguine speculation of a mere student, whose closet abstractions would never stand ground, when brought into collision on the same tapis with the practical wisdom of practical men. It was tolerated nevertheless by the authorities of the place, but just as any harmless crotchet would be, or piece of innocent Utopianism. And hence it was thought better, that, instead of crushing it by the rude hand of power, it should be suffered to go into gentle dissipation at the touch of time and of experience. And hence it was resolved to give it line, when it would soon make proof of its own Quixotism. We appeal to the still abiding recollection of more than twenty years back—if, mixed with no little derision and disdain, our proposal was not met with an incredulity which was all but universal. And it is worthy of all observation—not the confident and general anticipation of a failure, but the specific ground on which this coming certainty was looked for. This was that we should soon have to give in for want of funds. We had separated ourselves from the assessment—and it was predicted that no collections however liberal could replace such a privation. The money in fact the palpable money, with the direct and obvious arithmetic founded thereupon, was the only element of their computation. And so the only alternative which ever came within their field of contemplation was—either that we should speedily repair anew to the old fountain-head of supply, whence to replenish our exhausted treasury; or, if reduced to make our two ends meet, that this could only be done by such a system of spare and

wretched allowances, as would starve out our poor, and force them to take refuge in the other parishes of Glasgow.

10. But it is high time to enter on the description of our process. We divided the parish into twenty-five parts; and, having succeeded in obtaining as many deacons, we assigned one part to each—thus placing under his management towards fifty families, or at an average about four hundred of a gross population. We constructed also a familiar or brief directory which we put into their hands.* It laid down the procedure which should be observed on every application that was made for relief. It was our perfect determination that every applicant of ours should be at least as well off as he would have been in any other parish of Glasgow, *had his circumstances there been as well known*—so that, surrounded though we were by hostile and vigilant observers, no case of scandalous allowance, or still less of scandalous neglect, was ever made out against us. The only distinction between us and our neighbours lay in this—that these circumstances were by us most thoroughly scrutinized, and that with the view of being thoroughly ascertained—and that very generally in the progress of the investigation, we came in sight of opportunities or openings for some one or other of those preventive expedients by which any act of public charity was made all the less necessary, or very often superseded altogether. These expedients must now be quite familiar to the reader.

* Vol. II. of the Christian and Economic Polity of a Nation, p. 65, or Vol. XV. of the series.

There was no case brought before the deacons as a court, till each deacon to whom it individually belonged had first made sure what each applicant could do for himself, and what his relatives or neighbours were either doing or would do for him; and we certainly at all times held it the better, the more excellent way, when a sufficiency could be made out from the person's own industry, or from the kindness of those about him, than that he should be admitted as a pensioner on the charity of the parish. This was very soon understood by the people themselves to be the system on which we acted. Let me add that each deacon was perfectly known to the families of his own district, was perfectly accessible to every complaint or tale of necessity; and never, that I knew, blinked or evaded a single application. No doubt he claimed the privilege of a strict search and entry upon the question of every man's state, who should claim through him relief from the parish fund. But it is possible to conduct an investigation of this sort with all gentleness and civility; and it was this union I believe of firmness with kindness, which formed the great secret, both of our popularity and our success.

11. But it has been alleged against us, that, if our success was extraordinary, our means for the accomplishment of it were alike extraordinary—that is a Sabbath collection which amounted to £600 a-year. To obviate this, and demonstrate of our process how imitable it was in other parishes—we suffered the whole of this collection to remain in the hands of the elders, and that in the

first instance for defraying the expenses of the old pauperism with which by our bargain with the Town Hospital we had agreed to charge ourselves. The business of the deacons lay exclusively with the new pauperism, it being their part to deal with every application which might be made by any one for the first time to obtain relief from the parish. And the only fund placed at their disposal cut of which they could meet these applications—was the produce of a small evening collection, made up of the humble halfpence gathered at the church-doors from a poor parochial congregation, altogether distinct from the wealthier congregation which assembled through the day from all parts of the town. This little collection fell short of £100 a-year; and from it alone the deacons were expected to provide, for a time at least, for all the new applicants whom it should be found necessary to admit on the charity of the parish. It will at once be seen that the essence of the problem lay in the treatment of these new cases; and that if they could be met from our evening collection, then might they have been met in other parishes from the produce of their day collections, in all instances superior to the one wherewith our deacons were intrusted. We must confess that we had another reason for restricting our deacons at the first to the use of these evening collections alone. We were fearful of a laxer and less careful management even from them, had the whole collection been placed at their disposal. It was never on the abundance of our means, but

solely on the vigour and care of our management, that we counted for a prosperous issue to our experiment; and we did apprehend that with a large sum in their hands, they would not have been so strenuous in their inquiries, or gone so busily in quest of other and previous expedients for the relief of the cases before them, as when actuated by the stimulating consideration of the little they had to bestow. As it was they did their part admirably, and in a way that rivetted all my former convictions on the subject—superadding the verification of a particular example to the assurance, not of a previous theory, but of a previous general experience on the laws and tendencies of human nature.

12. The reason will now be seen why we have denominated that process by which a parish finds its way back from the compulsory system to the old gratuitous economy for the relief of its poor—why we have termed it a retracing process. For the work even of most salutary reforms, we have no liking for a movement that is at all violent or desultory. We have the greatest admiration for what in physics, Leibnitz has termed the law of continuity; a law which it were well to respect in the accomplishment of political or economic changes. It was not by an act of dismissal, even though warranted by a fair scrutiny, that we sought to get rid of the old pauperism. We cared not though in every case, he who had been already admitted upon its roll should be seen to his grave in the full sufficiency of his present al-

lowances. It was obvious that in the course of nature, or by the operation of death on the pauperism that had been formed under the compulsory system, we should be soon freed from it, nor had we any wish to be freed from it sooner. It was quite enough that while at the one end the old pauperism was melting gradually away, the whole success of the experiment hinged on the rate at which the new pauperism was admitted at the other end—a rate we affirm which might be lessened indefinitely, and that without the harsh or unfeeling rejection of any applicant, but with the bestowal of a most kind and patient and considerate attention on all his circumstances; and finally, in far the greater majority of instances, a better disposal of him than that of finding or forcing a way for him to the charity of the parish. It was our confident anticipation that by the time the old pauperism had died out, the collection at the church doors would be found an ample landing-place for all the new pauperism that should meanwhile have been formed—a transition this we confess of that progressive character, which one feels or gropes his way to as if by a tentative or experimental process—that is vastly more to our taste, than any large or sudden innovation effected at once and *per saltum* on an actual system of things. This we are sensible does not suit an age that is impatient of slow processes, it being alike distasteful indeed to two very different classes of society—those who, averse to all change, would resolutely keep by things as they are; and those who, bent on things as they should be, must have

them now or never. In action they would be anarchists, in speculation they are Utopians.*

13. But let us resume our narrative. There was an inconvenient yet very natural reaction to which we were exposed at the very outset of this our undertaking. It was known among the people, that ours was to be some new and peculiar method for the management of our poor. With many, a better management was construed into a more liberal distribution. This in the first instance had all the effect which we have been in the habit of ascribing to the known existence of a compulsory provision—the effect of a disturbing force upon the families, and so subjected us to an excess of applications, which had each to be disposed of according to the principles of our system, but which speedily subsided when the system came to be understood. Ours was a strict, though in every case a friendly investigation—the object of which was to ascertain all the previous means and resources of which we should avail ourselves, ere we drew on the public charity at all. All who were conscious of possessing such means simply ceased to apply; and the number of applications fell in a month or two to about one-fifth of the number made under the old system. Such was one of the earliest fruits of our greater painstaking at the first—that it obtained for us in all time coming, greater liberty and leisure for a thorough inquiry into the merits of every future application.

14. The result at the end of the first four years

* Vol. II. of the Christian and Economic Polity of a Nation, or Vol. XV. of the series, p. 180.

greatly exceeded even our own anticipations. In a parish of at that time about ten thousand people, rapidly on the increase and the poorest in Glasgow, there was only formed during the whole of that period a new pauperism the cost of which amounted to the annual sum of £66 : 6s. Deduct certain cases of immorality which ought not to be provided for in this way, and the cases of lunacy or other institutional disease which ought to be provided for at the public expense ; and the whole of our yearly charge for general indigence amounted to £32. The number of paupers which had been taken on was thirteen.

15. Such a result might well be as astonishing as if no paupers had been taken on at all. And indeed it would have required but a small effort to have drawn a little more largely on our previous expedients, and so as to have prevented even these thirteen from coming on the roll. The management of our deacons, however admirable when looked to collectively and in the gross, cannot be imagined to have been out and out so absolutely perfect and faultless, that no one instance of relaxation can be alleged against it. I recollect when one of their number quitted his office for the higher degree of the eldership. There was an aged female in his district of great Christian worth, and who beside being a great favourite among her neighbours had a number of visitors from a distance. Thus surrounded, there was the moral certainty of her being well looked after ; and therefore though we would not resist, could not sympathize with the proposal of her

being admitted as one of our pensioners. An allowance of 5s. a month was granted to her, which accounts for at least £3 of the £32 that formed our whole annual expenditure. My only hope is, that it might have been unknown to neighbours and acquaintances—else there were the hazard of its being followed up by the abandonment of a sympathy on their part prolific of a far larger relief and sustenance to this aged worthy, than the pompous yet after all paltry allowance of our parochial court.*

16. But more than the half remains to be told—and that is, beside the smallness of the expenditure, the perfect facility of the management. On this latter subject too, there is a deep, I had almost said, a hopeless misunderstanding, and which after the weary reiteration of twenty years, I still find to be well nigh incurable. One would have thought, that, could anything have opened the eyes of the public to the lightness of the task which they had taken in hand, it should have been the recorded testimony of the deacons themselves. On leaving St John's, I sent a circular amongst them bearing a few queries, the object of which was to ascertain the exact amount of time and labour which they had expended on their respective undertakings, and that had been brought to so triumphant an issue. Their replies have been before the world more than seventeen years; and though

* See examples of our parochial management in St John's, in the Appendix to our Speech on Pauperism, delivered before the General Assembly of 1821, to be found at p. 189—192, of Vol. III., of the Christian and Economic Polity of a Nation, which forms Vol. XVI. of our series.

I say it, I am aware of nothing more valuable in the annals of pauperism—nothing which comes nearer to the very essence and philosophy of the question, than the simple unvarnished statements of these eminently practical men, who had been engaged at close quarters with the subject for so many years—each in charge of a district with from three to four hundred people, and altogether of a parish that latterly grew in population to about twelve thousand. If theirs be not experience, I have yet to learn what is meant by the term; nor would I know to what quarter I should turn in quest of the place where truth is to be found. Theirs is experience, and what alone is deserving of the name—experience charged with principle—truth at first hand.

17. There may have been some initial labour at the commencement of each deaconship, in making surveys and first visits for the purpose of obtaining an acquaintance both with the state of the families, and with the families themselves; and we hope also many genial visits paid in friendly intercourse, and with a view both to the economic and educational good of the districts. What I wanted to know was the time currently spent in the affairs of pauperism alone; and I now know on striking an average of all the replies, that it certainly did not exceed three hours a-month.*

18. Such is the fact—a most important one truly—for after the first objection to our scheme

* See the replies of my deacons at pp. 240—261, of Vol. III. of the Christian and Economic Polity of a Nation, being Vol. XVI. of the series.

had been dissipated, that it required means which no ordinary church collection could supply, a second in full confidence and force was ready to take its place, that it required a management which no man in ordinary business could possibly have time for. It was as indispensable to meet this atter difficulty as to meet the former, for the purpose of making out the perfect imitableness of our system in all other parishes. But the extreme facility of this management looks a thing so marvellous as to demand an explanation—an explanation we have so often given, that an utter weariness comes upon our spirits when required from us anew. To be satisfied with, or even perhaps to understand it, one must have seized on the principle whereon the success of our undertaking hinges. It was not we in fact who executed or resolved the problem. The people did it for us. At the very time that we were complimented on the exceeding skill and strenuousness of our administration, we were lying on our oars and doing nothing—we mean nothing in the matter of pauperism, and for this good reason that nothing or next to nothing was required of us. The result did not come forth of the administrative energies of our system—for excepting in first cases or first applications, such energy was seldom or never afterwards required of any of our deacons. It came from the reflex influence of our system on the families themselves. They knew that each proposal of theirs for relief would be met on our part by a strict investigation of all their resources, whether these lay in their own capabilities or in

the help of others; and all who were conscious of such resources forbore to apply. The knowledge of a compulsory provision operated as a disturbing force both on the self-care and on the sympathies of Nature. Remove that provision; and these principles were restored to their proper force or original play. The body politic of our parish was put into a better condition, and all its evolutions went on more prosperously than before—not by any skilful mechanism of ours, but by the spontaneous working of Nature's previous and better mechanism.*

19. But let it not be imagined that though our deacons had little left for them to do in the matter of pauperism, they therefore did little for the good of the parish or the well-being of its inhabitants. It is not conceivable of any well principled man, whose heart was in its right place, that he should take the charge of a district, and yet take no interest in the state of its families. It were of the utmost moral importance to every cluster of our plebeian households, that we attached to each the visits and the acquaintanceship of a functionary—even though he should stand in no other relationship to its inmates than that of their general wellwisher and friend. We cannot doubt that by the influence of these men, much was done for the people—that in virtue of their surveillance, our sewing and Sabbath and week-day schools were all better attended—that their frequent presence told on the comfort and cleanli-

* Vol. III. p. 340 of Christian and Economic Polity, &c., being Vol. XVI. of the series.

ness and whole interior economy of the houses—and that altogether there was a certain elevation of tone and habit in the little communities over which they severally expatiated. We have the most perfect assurance of such an arrangement, simple as it was, that it issued in the goodly result of a blander and better and more humanized population; and that, wholly apart from the distribution of money, there was not only a greater contentment, and not only a greater felt but a greater actual sufficiency than before. By the converse of our deacons, they were not only cheered in the midst of their difficulties, but occasionally without question were helped out of them—far more however by advice than pecuniary aid, better taught how to husband their own resources and make their own hands minister to their own necessities. Over and above, the wholesome processes that we have so often described of relative and internal charity among themselves, though not certainly originated by our deacons, would at the least not be slackened or suspended—when calling forth as they invariably would, the homage of their grateful acknowledgments, the encouragement of their approving testimony.

20. But this general statement will not suffice against the oft repeated charge, that we starved our poor and so drove them out of the parish. Had we counted on this expedient for getting rid of our pauperism, we should never have solicited a law of mutual protection between ourselves and the other parishes of Glasgow. But our still more decisive reply is, that a register was kept both of

the paupers who left, and the paupers who flowed in upon us; and that our imports exceeded our exports—thereby exposing us to the charge, not merely of the poor admitted to parochial charity by ourselves, but of the whole surplus poor that were so admitted under the laxer administration that obtained in the rest of the city. In March 1823, or three years and a half after the commencement of our system, fifteen of our own paupers had left and 29 of the other Glasgow paupers had come to reside in our parish, the maintenance of whom fell under the charge of our deacons. In 1837, the whole efflux amounted to 29, the influx to 61. The truth is, that our system, parsimonious as it was in the distribution of parish money, was exceedingly popular; and to those who have any understanding of human nature this fact will not be inexplicable. We have only to think of the charm which lies in personal attention, and in the intercourse that we hold with the too often neglected poor, who after all stand much oftener in need of advice than they do of alms; and who, though they received less from us than in other parishes, received a great deal more, and especially if we include their own better management of their own affairs, from the other sources that we had opened up for them. We had no doubt greatly fewer applicants; but though less money was given, more trouble was taken with each of them; and we either ascertained their circumstances to be such, or placed them in such circumstances—that had they been any where else in Glasgow, and as well known as we knew them, no

further care or cognizance of their state would have been deemed necessary. But in some shape or other we never ceased that cognizance or care; and hence, though pauperism was the least of our concerns, there was altogether a blandness in the atmosphere of St John's, which made it the best liked, and most genial of any to the feeling of our general population.

21. But these resolute adversaries of ours are not yet fully or finally disposed of—for, bent on finding some vulnerable place, if they do not succeed at one part, they in quest of an opening will go round to another. And accordingly they have made discovery that our deacons were all men of unbounded wealth, the gentlemen of our day's congregation—who scattered liberally of their means among the people, and practised a sort of juggle on the public eye, by causing the same amount of money which must otherwise have come to the poor out of the church-door plates, by causing it come out of their own pockets. This looks a very direct and literal explanation of the thing—an explanation quite in keeping with the plain arithmetical understandings of those who offer it, as also with the mental calibre of those whom it satisfies. And if called to the bar of account, and there to confess the liberality of our deacons as if it were a crime, there were times and occasions, we fear, on which it could be brought home—so that, unable to prove either an alias or an alibi, we must plead guilty. They were men of various fortune—some of them in respectable business, and others having little or

nothing to spare. It was a most improving experience to observe how they severally sped in their respective districts. There was one very poor outskirt of the parish, between Marlborough and Abercromby streets, placed under the care of a merchant's clerk, and whose house was on the very margin of his deaconry. There was another from Hill street and eastward, whose deacon was journeyman to a house-wright; and we can vouch of both these localities, that, with greatly more than the average natural poverty, there was almost no pauperism—and this, not most certainly from the personal outgivings of our office-bearers, but altogether from the wholesome effect of our system on the people themselves. In contrast with these, we cannot place the imprudence of our wealthier deacons, who were too well inoculated in the principles of our management to do mischief by a profuse and indiscriminate liberality. But we can state our recollections of two elders, themselves in prosperous circumstances, and who stood signalized amongst us, by a somewhat generous and free, but withal not very discriminating charity. The effect of this, especially in one of the districts, was quite notorious.* Some of its people, thrown

* One of these elders let me know that he spent £40 a-year on the population of his district—no great expenditure after all among a population of four or five hundred, and sufficiently evincing that under a judicious system of management a very little money might go an immense way in satisfying the fair demands of all the families. The other elder alarmed me by his favourite scheme of a Sabbath-school clothing society for the whole parish. From this I succeeded in dissuading him, and had the comfort in a few months of preaching to 1200 parochial children all most respectably attired by their own parents or natural superiors. See a specimen of the effect, when, instead of luring them to education

restless and agog, by the facility and open-handedness of the elder, flowed over upon the deacon, and gave us more trouble than half the parish besides—making it quite palpable to us all, that it was in management not in money that the great strength of our system lay—or more even than in management, that the success of our peculiar economy was mainly owing to its natural but withal most beneficial reaction on the general habit of the families.

22. At the same time ours was any thing but a system of neglect. Our deacons did not shut their doors against the poor; and, even though it should be absurdly triumphed over as if it were the detection of a fallacy, we most willingly admit it as our hope and our persuasion, that they did not shut their hearts against them. They were men of principle; and it would neither have consisted with their nature nor with their Christianity, to have treated as so many nullities the virtues of that gospel which tells us to open our bowels of compassion when the needy stand before us, and that we should be willing to distribute and ready to communicate. Were we asked to define their peculiar vocation, we should say that it was to discriminate between the deserving and the undeserving poor; and while the latter were kept at bay, or shamed out of their importunities, the former we have no doubt were peculiarly cared for. It was certainly quite to be looked for that

by the bribery of our gifts, we directly interest both parents and children in the object itself.—Christian and Economic Polity of a Nation, Vol. I. p. 96, being Vol. XIV. of the series.

their own private charities would take a direction towards the poor of their own district, with whom they were most in contact, and whom they visited frequently. But that their charities were in the least romantic or oppressive, I most positively deny; and it remains therefore a great discovery, open at all times to the verification of those who choose to make the trial—that a single philanthropist may undertake the office of counsellor and friend to some hundreds of any contiguous population, however poor; and, without any inconvenient sacrifice either of time or money, may put them, and that chiefly out of their own capabilities, into a far better economic state, than any legal or compulsory system of relief ever has, and we shall add ever can do.*

* The following is a letter from Mr Wm. Buchanan, Treasurer of the Deacons' Fund, and himself one of the Deacons:—

GLASGOW, 7*th January*, 1841.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—I received your much esteemed letter of the 2nd on Tuesday, and in answer to what you mention is said (and I have often heard it said), that the St John's experiment succeeded through the immense private expenditure of the Deacons on the poor, I have just to repeat, what I am sure I have stated a hundred times, that the private relief afforded to the poor in the Parish has been *immensely* overrated—for, in truth, had all the givings of a private kind, by all the Deacons, been added together at the end of any year, the amount would have been found to be a very trifle. Many of the cases that received this aid were strangers, who had no claim upon Glasgow, or parties who had no liking to accept of *public charity*, but to whom a shilling or two now and then afforded a little temporary aid.

We have all a little private charity to give; and surely there is no way in which it can be better bestowed, than upon those with whose wants and habits we are well acquainted.

Had the Deacons of St John's opened their purses and been so liberal as the opponents of our system say they were, then I consider that they would have been doing the system a very great injury and the people no permanent good—as our great aim was to

23. That our success was the result, not of liberality from without, but mainly of the home capabilities now more largely drawn upon, when the compulsory provision ceased to be an object of dependence or desire, is palpable from this—that in those districts the experiment prospered as much, we think more so, where the deacons had the least to give out of their own resources. And we certainly are not aware of a dozen instances, in which the benevolence of the wealthy beyond the parish was called to interpose on behalf of any of our families.

24. The general anticipation of our adversaries, that our means would be speedily exhausted and we should soon have to give in, not only failed of accomplishment, but was strikingly reversed. We did feel embarrassment, but from a cause the opposite of that which our enemies were counting on—not from the deficiency of our supplies, but

encourage the people in industrious habits, and to get their children taught to read the word of God; and if ever the poor of our land are provided for as they ought, it is to be through a system such as was so triumphantly carried on in St John's for nineteen years.

I cannot help adding, that notwithstanding all the plans at present in operation for the support of the poor generally, as retreats for the neglected are just so many allurements to vice and idleness, if a system of sound Scriptural education and Pastoral superintendence is not adopted throughout the parishes of our land, it requires no great foresight to perceive that the day will come when our Jails, Bridewells, and Houses of Refuge, will all require to be enlarged and their number increased. A friend of ours has a short but truly pithy and sound saying, "the People will cost us" either for education or jails.

I hope you will excuse these brief statements. I am not given to amplify, nor can I, but to state matters of fact and truth.

Yours most sincerely,

Wm. Buchanan.

in truth from the redundance of them. The produce of the evening collection was in the hands of the deacons fully equal to the new pauperism,—while the day collection, more than equal to the old sessional pauperism, left an accumulating surplus of which I confess that I stood in dread, lest the superabundance of our means should tempt to a relaxation of our management. On this account I all the more readily consented to the proposal, that we should go beyond the original tenor of our bargain with the Town Hospital, and relieve that institution immediately of all the old cases from St John's that were still upon their funds, so as in about two years to rid our parish altogether of its compulsory pauperism. The fact of such a redundancy in our means as enabled us to give the Town Hospital a large yearly allowance—the very opposite of their own prediction that such would be the deficiency as should speedily force us to draw from that institution—might well have opened the eyes of our adversaries to the truth, that in something else than the arithmetical element of money did the secret of our strength lie.

25. After upwards of four years' connexion with the parish of St John's, I left Glasgow in November, 1823, and it was well I did. By this time the enemies of our system had changed their argument. Baffled in their first anticipation that our means would fall short of the achievement, they had recourse to an hypothesis by which to cover the mortification of a defeated prophecy, uttered with all confidence a few years before, but which had been most signally reversed. They

could no longer withstand the palpable fact, that, instead of coming for aid to the Town Hospital, we had gone beyond our first contract and relieved them of all our poor; beside lodging from the produce of our day's collection the sum of £500 with the city Corporation for a perpetual salary to a schoolmaster, and expending from the same source upwards of £100 a-year for the cheaper scholarship of our families. And the argument that we starved and drove out our poor on the other parishes could no longer serve them, seeing that our imports were far more numerous than our exports. Neither could the argument of our large collection, seeing that our new pauperism was all met from the scanty offerings of our evening or plebeian congregation. But resolute in their hostility, they had recourse to another and desperate fetch, and of which the adversaries to our method still avail themselves. Determined at all hazards to get rid of the system, yet driven from one plea and position to another, they at length fell on a very original way of fastening discredit upon it; and that was under the guise of a compliment to its author. At the outset of our enterprise nothing was heard of but the utter folly and weakness of the project; and when it did succeed, they managed to keep up its discredit by ascribing the whole success to the marvellous and preternatural strength of the projector. And so the conclusion was that it would not do in ordinary hands. The fact of our having fully and absolutely accomplished all, and more than all, that we undertook to do, they could not disguise from

themselves; and this was the way in which they disposed of it—if not by an express, at least by a tacit reference in their imagination, to a sort of wizard power which they were pleased to ascribe to the great Katterfelto or wonder-worker that had come amongst them from the east. And so the whole effect on their minds was a kind of gaping astonishment, the same that any feat of magic or necromancy has on a multitude of spectators—without one ray of light to penetrate their understandings; or enable them to discern what that was which really effectuated the result, or wherein it was that the success of our operation lay. There was obviously no method by which to disabuse them of this strange impression, but by turning my back on the whole concern; and thus testing the inherent soundness and efficacy of the system itself by leaving it in other hands. Resolved as they were to account for it in no other way, than by the supposition of some dexterous juggle or legerdemain on my part, nay in several instances I was told, by the allegation of a colossal or gigantic superiority over all other men—the only way in which I could dissipate the illusion, was by the disseveration of myself from Glasgow and all its controversies: And, in the hope that I might be succeeded by some plain gospel minister, I did flatter myself that the truth would at length break in upon them, when they came to see of our parochial economy that it would stand its ground —even with every-day instruments operating on every day materials.

26. I accordingly left the parish in November,

1823, and had there been any flaw or failure in our scheme it would soon have bewrayed itself*—for never, we venture to say, without a principle of native vigour and vitality in itself, could it have survived for a single year the amount of rough handling to which it was exposed. There was first a lengthened vacancy of near a twelvemonth, during which the deacons had it all to themselves—then the brief incumbency of my first successor—then another vacancy also of unusual duration—then a second successor of whom it may emphatically be said, that, in the apostolic spirit of the first founders of Christianity who gave themselves wholly to the ministry of the word and to prayer, he left the secular ministration exclusively to its own proper office-bearers. Beside all this, there was a rapidly increasing population, the persevering discountenance if not hostility of almost all public men and public bodies to our enterprise, a most unprosperous chapel which ought to have been an auxiliary but proved a burden upon the cause; and last, but most overwhelming of all, the entire neglect and non-performance of the condition which we announced from the first as indispensable to our success—there having been no exemption of our Parish from an assessment to which it contributed its full proportion as before, and without for years drawing from it a single farthing for any of its families. Never was any mechanism of human contrivance more severely tried, or brought more closely to the

* See Christian and Economic Polity, &c. Vol. III. pp. 270—276, being Vol. XVI. of the series. Also in the same Volume, pp. 267—269.

touchstone; and yet, in the midst of all these discouragements, let us hear the testimonies of my two successors—the first Dr M'Farlane now of Greenock, the second Dr Brown still the venerable minister of St John's in Glasgow.*

27. When examined before a Committee of the House of Commons in 1830, I detailed the whole of these proceedings; and the state of the Parish at that time or seven years after I had left it. I even then spoke of it no longer as an experiment, but as an experience—regarding the trial as completed, and the lesson to be drawn from it as fully and conclusively given. The experiment in fact was as good as repeated and with perfect success three times over—for so shortlived is a generation of Scottish pauperism, from averagely speaking the more advanced age of entry than in England, that I would scarcely rate it at so much as four years. Now the system had been in operation about eleven years; and with every promise of stability so far as the fitness and power of its own mechanism were concerned, if the agents would only keep by their posts, and continue to work it as heretofore. But of this I felt and confessed my apprehensions; and in the evidence which I then gave I told my examinators, that I could not look for the perseverance of my Deacons under the discountenance and apathy of a public who seemed wholly insensible to the value of their services.†

* See Nos. 130 and 134 of my Evidence before the Commons' Committee, in Vol. III, of the Christian and Economic Polity, being Vol. XVI. of the series.

† See the last paragraph of No. 134, and 150 of my Evidence.

It is true I stood in need of no further trial to satisfy myself; and, after what I had seen of the obstinate incredulity or rather utter listlessness of the official men in Glasgow, I had given up all hope of ever opening their eyes. Still, of the two alternatives, I felt it better that they should keep together in the face of every discouragement, and I will add of every provocation, rather than that they should suffer the parish to merge again into that system of the surrounding parishes from which they had so nobly reclaimed it. But though I wished this of them I could not ask it of them; but left the matter to proceed as it might seem good unto themselves. It was therefore all the more grateful to me, that, after having served eleven thankless years from the time I left them to 1830 when I stood the examination of a Parliamentary Committee, they added other seven years of service as thankless as the former. It was during this last period that they were visited by Mr Tuffnell, one of the Assistant Poor-law Commissioners from England in 1833. In his Report he tells both of the completeness of our experiment, and the flagrant injustice under which it was suffering. Of the experiment I had no fear. That I felt to be already settled, and settled it has been four times over. My fear was not for the experiment, but for the experimentalists. I certainly should not have made the attempt, could I have anticipated such a relentless hostility and prejudice, or if not this, such downright obtuseness and perversity of intellect among the spectators of its success—and if I would not have begun the enterprise had I

thus anticipated, how could I expect that my Deacons would persevere in it after it was thus realized? I was disappointed, and make open avowal of it—not in the result of the experiment itself, which was all I could have wished, but in its utter powerlessness of effect on the minds of the public functionaries in Glasgow—men who denounced it as theory at the first, and who, after it had become experience, would not receive, would not even read the lesson which had been so palpably set before their eyes. Our readers will again be reminded of the distinction already made, between the natural and the political difficulties of our problem. The former have all been conquered. The latter have stood the assault, alike impregnable to facts and to reasonings, and so abide as stoutly invincible as before. This has long awakened my bitterest regret; but it cannot shake my confidence. Even one decisive experiment in chemistry will establish a principle, that shall remain an enduring certainty in science—even though an edict of power, in the spirit of that blind and haughty Pontiff who denounced the Copernican system, should forbid the repetition of it. My experiment has been made, and given forth its indelible lesson, although my experimentalists have been disheartened and scared away. This no more invalidates the great truth which they have exemplified so well, than a mandate of intolerance can repeal a law of physical nature, or change the economy of the universe.

28. But we must explain what it was that laid our parochial economy under so heavy a discour-

agement, and which at once calls forth my gratitude and my wonder that the Deacons of St John's should have kept together so long in the support of it. First then all the while that they were employed, and with such great and signal success, in keeping down the pauperism of their own parish, they lay open to the importation of all the pauperism that was manufactured so readily and abundantly in the other parishes of Glasgow. It is true that in virtue of this intercommunion, they might have been relieved of somewhat of their own pauperism; and so they were, but how stood the balance between these two processes? The whole number of imports during the management of our Deacons amounted to sixty-one, the whole number of exports only to twenty-nine—leaving an excess of thirty-two, to be supported by our funds though not admitted into the roll under our examination. This was a grievous exposure, to be thus saddled *ab extra* with an expense not of our own bringing on, and for which we were not in the least responsible—a disadvantage this that we never could get rid of, and which indeed, in their conversation with the proper functionaries of the place previous to the resignation of their peculiar charge, our people were told was impossible. But there was the evil of a far greater injustice than this, and from which all redress was in like manner denied to them. Nothing could be more obviously equitable than that a poor parish, the poorest in Glasgow, which had thus struggled its way to its own emancipation from pauperism, and had not for sixteen years drawn a single farthing from the compulsory

fund, should itself have been exempted from any further contributions to it. But no. During the whole of that period it cost the Town Hospital nothing—yet during the whole of that period continued to pay the Town Hospital as before, maintaining their own poor, yet subject to all their wonted exactions for the general maintenance of the poor in Glasgow. Just figure the encouragement to imitation in other parishes—had we earned as the fruit of our achievement, an immunity from the assessment for all who were connected either by residence or property with St John's; and how it would have animated afresh our Deacons, had they thus become the guides and examples of a process, by which to liberate, not only Glasgow, but the other towns and assessed parishes of Scotland, from that incubus which they had so conclusively and fully shaken off from their own territory. But instead of this, not one voice, save that of an impartial stranger* from a distance, was lifted up in the acknowledgment of their great service—nor one helping hand to move aside the obstructions, for relief from which our men of local authority at home, but also of local partiality and prejudice, were solicited in vain. We never could anticipate of our Deacons, that they would stand out for ever, under the burden of that heavy discountenance which lay upon them. Nor could aught else be looked for but at length an inert and spiritless ministration, on the part of men

* Mr Tuffnel, an extract from whose Report will be found at the end of Vol. III. of Christian and Economic Polity—being Vol. XVI. of the series.

who were fairly wearied out, and could no longer be expected to maintain the vigilance and strict guardianship of other years, after all hope of a general reformation was extinguished, and no other purpose was now to be served than that of upholding a mere spectacle—a thing not to be copied, but only to be stared at—an oasis in the desert, which men could point to as a sort of marvel or mystery, but would not take a single lesson from—an object to wonder at, but not to be taught by. And accordingly in 1837, or eighteen years after the commencement of our enterprise, it was at length desisted from—not by any infirmity of the process itself in virtue of which the experiment failed; but, which is truly a different thing, by a voluntary determination on the part of the operators in virtue of which the experiment was given up.

29. We certainly did calculate, that, on the event of its success, we should have had many imitators; and that thus the old system, with all its disturbing and contagious influences, might have been speedily cleared away from the neighbourhood of our experiment. Had the infection of all the contiguous territory been removed, we should have had still less of importunity than we had actually to combat; and much less vigilance in the treatment of particular cases would have been called for. Our task was obviously all the more difficult, that it had to be performed in the midst of an assessed instead of an unassessed region. This difficulty we did expect to be relieved from, after that we had completed the exemplification of our own peculiar method; and its practical sound-

ness had come to be recognised and acted on by followers around us. It was not in possibility, or in nature, but that our Deacons should lose heart —when they found that a general reform, the great object which at first set the enterprise agoing, and for which alone it was felt worth while to persevere, was every day becoming more hopeless and unlikely. And let it be observed, that a very slight relaxation, a more listless and perfunctory management on the part of a very few—of four, five, or six, out of the twenty-five—would of itself suffice to overset the whole system—not to be sure, when a compulsory provision is done away from the country at large—but when it is still at hand, and open to be resorted to as before. I cannot therefore but repeat the expression of my astonishment that the Deacons, notwithstanding their many discouragements, resisted this temptation so long; and that, holding out for the long period of eighteen years, they have stamped a verification on the system of gratuitous charity, which all the skill and sophistry of its opponents will never do away.

30. And that the verification was complete, let us take for evidence the final pecuniary account of the whole undertaking.

ABSTRACT OF THE

Treasurer's Account of Receipts and Disbursements of the Funds of St John's Parish, Glasgow, as applicable to the Maintenance of the Poor, Educational Purposes, &c., from 26th Sept., 1819, till 30th Sept., 1837.

RECEIPTS.			
To Collections at Church and Chapel Doors	L.7350	18	10
„ Do. at Church Doors from Evening Congregation	401	12	6½
„ Seat Rents from Evening Congregation	469	8	4
„ Legacies and Donations	241	6	11½
„ Town's Hospital, for the Support of Poor found in the Hospital in September, 1819	461	17	10
„ Collections for Religious and Charitable Purposes not Parochial	1994	11	4½
„ Interest on Bank Account, and from City of Glasgow	357	2	1½
„ Rent of Mortcloth	60	9	9
„ General Session Fund for Education	389	6	6
„ Collections for St John's Chapel Funds	400	7	0
„ Do. for St John's Parochial Schools	632	1	9
„ Stirling Session on Account of a Lunatic Pauper.	251	10	1
„ Lockhart's Mortification for Sabbath Schools	40	12	0
„ Collection for forming New Road through College Ground	10	0	0
„ Share of Dr Bell's Legacy	39	0	0
„ Collections for Sabbath Evening Schools	77	12	8½
„ Pensioners, Allowance to their Families	287	5	10
„ Balance due to the Treasurer	229	8	½
	L.13,691	11	8

DISBURSEMENTS.			
By Paupers, Lunatics, Orphans, Foundlings, Coffins, &c.	L.6551	17	7½
„ Religious and Charitable Purposes, not Parochial	1994	11	4½
„ Cost of Mortcloth	82	8	6
„ Precentor and Beadle for Evening Congregation, Door-keepers, Lighting, &c.	634	11	3½
„ Soup Kitchen and Coals for Poor	44	1	3
„ Prizes for Parochial Schools, Stationery, &c.	183	10	1
„ Salary to the Rev. Mr Irving as Assistant	400	0	0
„ Sacramental Elements for St John's Chapel and Evening Congregation	215	4	4
„ Teachers' Salaries, Education of Poor, Insurance, and Repairs on Schools	1902	19	10
„ Lent to City of Glasgow for Endowment of one Parochial School	500	0	0
„ St John's Chapel Funds	401	10	½
„ Support of a Stirling Lunatic Pauper	263	5	1
„ Sabbath Evening Schools from Lockhart's Mortification	40	12	0
„ Making New Road through College Ground	10	0	0
„ Interest	10	15	6½
„ Alterations on School for Dr Bell's System	68	17	2
„ St John's Sabbath Evening Schools	77	12	8½
„ Families of Pensioners from Allowance	282	14	10
	L.13,691	11	8

31. Looking to the respective items, and confining ourselves to those which have strictly to do with parochial pauperism, we find that the collections of 18 years (day and evening) amounted to £7752 : 11 : 4½; and that the expenditure for the same period on paupers, lunatics, orphans, foundlings, coffins, &c., (along with soup kitchen and coals for the poor) amounted to £6595 : 18 : 10½ —leaving therefore a balance in favour of our experiment, and an arithmetical proof of its efficacy, amounting to £1156 : 12 : 6. Whence then came the total deficiency of £229 : 8 : 0½? From the excess of our expenditure for religious or educational objects above our income for these—having in fact given out nearly £1400 more on purposes of christian philanthropy, distinct from pauperism, than was collected or received for these objects. The success was complete, if you restrict the attention to the affairs of pauperism alone—the income for this exceeding the expenditure for this by £1156 : 12 : 6. And had we not exceeded our original proposal, and undertaken, some time after the system was begun, the support of the old St John's poor still lying on the funds of the Town Hospital—this expenditure, it appears from the account, would have been less on the whole by £461 : 17 : 10—So that the income of St John's from collections alone, and that for 18 years, exceeded the expenditure on its *new pauperism* for the same period by £1618 : 10 : 4. True its whole expenditure went beyond its whole income by £229 : 8 : 0½—But this, as we have already seen, was because of its outlays for education and

other purposes distinct from the relief of poverty. Taking an average of all the years, its annual income for the poor was £430 : 13 : 11½—its annual expenditure £366 : 8 : 9½.

32. But on a further analysis it will be found, that our expense for *general indigence* was considerably less than we have yet stated it. The whole charge for lunatics ought to be deducted, amounting to £351 : 1 : 4; and also the enormous outlay for foundlings, illegitimates, and the families of runaway parents, amounting to £702 : 6 : 9½. The former ought on every right principle to be supported in proper institutions, by a legal provision if necessary; and the latter, however otherwise disposed of, ought not to be supported or countenanced by an ecclesiastical charity. The two together amount to £1053 : 8 : 1½—and this sum deducted from £6595 : 18 : 10½, formerly given as for the relief of our poor, leaves as the precise sum expended for general indigence £5542 : 10 : 9. But the income for the poor amounted to £7752 : 11 : 4½—leaving therefore a balance in favour of the experiment, had we dealt with general indigence alone, of £2210 : 0 : 7½. To which if we add the £461 : 17 : 10 expended on old pauperism, we shall find that the excess of our church-door collections, over the amount of our expenditure on the new pauperism of all the general indigence that had been taken on for 18 years, came exactly to the sum of £2671 : 18 : 5½. The adequacy of the means to the enterprise is thus fully made out; and though such an experience of the capabilities of our system might well have encouraged the

perseverance of its supporters—yet that, in the midst of universal apathy and neglect, they should have at length given up their thankless services, we do not wonder and most certainly cannot blame them.

33. I not only have no fault to find with my old friends of St John's; but can scarcely even regret the determination they came to. Certain it is, if the perseverance of 18 years had no effect on the municipalists of Glasgow, they would have remained as heedless and as insensible at this hour, though the system had been still in as full and vigorous operation as before. During the long period of its continuance, the lesson given forth was never looked at, never listened to—the main reason why our deacons gave up repeating it any longer—for sure it is, that though to this moment presented as visibly and sounded forth as audibly, it would have been as little looked as little listened to as ever. And yet in the face of this consideration, even the most sincere friends of our system will profess to mourn over its abandonment as an event injurious to the cause. We feel it very hard, that if the spectacle of its full and decisive success has done nothing for it, the spectacle simply of its cessation should do every thing against it. It was far easier practically to do the thing—to rid that parish of its pauperism—than to convince a single creature that the thing was practicable. So long as our system was in operation, the voice given forth by it was unheeded and unheard, as if it acted the part of a soporific by lulling all men into a dead slumber. It is the cessa-

tion of the voice which seems to have awakened or startled them into a state of activity; and we are glad of it, though it be a state of active hostility to our cause. Men had gone to sleep on the subject; and it is well if anyhow they have been made to open their eyes. The truth when presented had no effect upon senses steeped all the while in dull forgetfulness. The same truth when reflected on may perhaps tell on understandings now somewhat alive, and work that conviction, which, at the time of its palpable and living exhibition, it failed to effectuate.*

34. But when I thus speak of the citizens of Glasgow, and complain that their minds were hermetically sealed against the whole truth and evidence of the question, I must not forget that if not exclusively, at least mainly, theirs is a mercantile society; and that with all the talent and practical sagacity by which they are distinguished in the matters of ordinary business, it was perhaps not to be expected, that they should bring these faculties to bear on a question which called for no immediate solution at their hands, and which did not lie within the range of their every-day experience. Assuredly there was no want of capacity for the subject, had we succeeded in gaining their patient and sustained attention to it; and we have no quarrel with them, but for their want of a felt or vivid interest in a topic, which, though admitting of no urgent application to their own personal affairs, possesses a high claim on the earnest and

* Christian and Economic Polity of a Nation, Vol. III. p. 434, being Vol. XVI. of the series.

benevolent consideration of every patriot, from its intimate connexion with the well-being of humanity. But we cannot offer the same apology for the Poor-law Commissioners of England who sent one of their own number, Mr Tuffnell, to investigate the state of pauperism in Scotland; and who though presented by him with a full and enlightened report on the nature and effects of our process in St John's, were pleased to pass it over without the slightest allusion, in the volume of extracts which they gave to the public—as containing, of course, the substance and pith of that evidence which they had collected from all parts of the country. Not that they did not make a distinct head of their information from Scotland; but, suppressing all which Mr Tuffnell had told them of Glasgow, they satisfied themselves with a few of the veriest scraps of his report on minor places, and of course thought it enough that these alone should be given to the world.* The best which can be said of their last and greatest reform, is that in some of its sterner, though in none of its kindlier features, it does somewhat approximate to the right and wholesome charity of principle—being still in fact but the superficial modification of what in its very nature is radically and essentially evil. But it possesses none of those gra-

* When utterance was made of this complaint at the meeting of the British Association, held in Glasgow; and it was replied that a separate account of these doings in St John's had been circulated throughout England to the extent of 16,000 copies; we still felt that it would have been more satisfactory, had the Commissioners so far accredited the process as to have admitted some notice of it into their own official compend of the informations which they had gathered on the subject of pauperism.

cious characteristics, and can exert none of those bland and benignant influences, which might all be realized in ordinary times under a gratuitous economy; and indeed are still exemplified throughout the majority of our Scottish parishes. If England will so idolize her own institutions, as be unwilling to part even with their worst vices, she must be let alone since she will have it so. But let her not inoculate with the virus of her own moral gangrene, those countries which have the misfortune to border on her territory, and be subject to her sway; and, more especially, let not the simple and venerated parochial system of our own land lie open to the crudities, or be placed at the disposal of a few cockney legislators.*

35. If I have been in aught too severe, when commenting on the apathy of the public in Glasgow to our question, and their various annoying misconceptions of our system in St John's—they have been abundantly kept in countenance by one, who, high in literature, and setting himself down to the formal task of instructing his countrymen and fellow-citizens by authorship on the subject, thus writes of it, and under the article too in his table of contents, "Of the total failure of the Voluntary System in Glasgow."

"All projects of relieving the miseries of the labouring classes in great cities, by voluntary contributions collected at church doors, are equally visionary and hopeless. In individual instances, under the management of enthusiastic benevolence, or with the aid of popular eloquence, sufficient funds may be raised in this way for the relief of the poor in city parishes. But not only are such talents or enthusiasm not generally to be looked for, but if they

* See our Political Economy, Vol. I. p. 413, being Vol. XIX. of the series.

existed generally they would fail in their effects. If all the clergy in a populous city possessed the genius or enthusiasm of a Chalmers, the contributions of the benevolent being distracted in so many quarters, would nowhere be adequate to their object. That distinguished individual succeeded in his own parish in Glasgow, by attracting the religious and enthusiastic from every part of that opulent city. It was the contrast between his genius and the monotonous uniformity of many of the clergy which occasioned his success. What he gained was lost in other quarters, where it was not less needed: in his own parish parochial assessment was not required, but it was only by rendering it the more necessary in those that surrounded it."

"It is a mistake to suppose that the eloquence of a popular preacher or benevolent philanthropist always *creates* the charity which is collected at his orations. He often rather *collects it* from other quarters, and exhibits in one united stream, what would otherwise have flowed unnoticed in a thousand rills. Under the impulse of the moment, indeed, larger sums may often be obtained from congregations affected by such thrilling efforts, than they would be disposed to give at ordinary times; but the reaction is frequently as powerful as the impulse, and what is gained to the cause of humanity in a moment of enthusiasm, is lost in the periods of calculation that succeed it. True benevolence does not require such excitation, nor is it subject to such irregular movements, but at all times seeks the relief of distress from no other motive but the desire to alleviate human suffering.

"It is in vain to found any general or permanent system for the relief of the poor upon any exertions of talent or philanthropy beyond the average experience of our nature. Individuals may be endowed with splendid abilities or warm benevolence, and by their exertions much may be done to mitigate the distress that surrounds them; but it is in vain to found any general measures upon the achievement of such rare ability. Generally speaking, the clergy will continue much the same as they have been, numbering among their members many persons distinguished both for their virtues and their learning, but, at the same time, composed of a vast majority of ordinary men. Persons relieved from the necessity of exertion to earn their daily food, of middle age, and enjoying for the most part a decent competence, cannot be expected to be always distinguished by extraordinary efforts. The permanent and extensive evils of pauperism must be relieved from some other source than that which is dependent upon their exertions."—*Alison on Population, Vol.* II. *pp.* 86, 88—90.

If an author of Sheriff Alison's eminence could so glaringly misstate, of course because he wholly misunderstood nor thought it worth while to in-

quire, the nature of a process that had been going on for years within a mile or two of his own dwelling-place—and that too in the face of publications given in my own name to the world long before the appearance of his work—I may well cease to wonder, in the midst of their secular pursuits and habits uncongenial to study, at the deep apathy, or, if they ever thought on the subject at all, at the unintelligent regards cast on our doings in the parish of St John's by the citizens of Glasgow.

36. In regard to the nauseous eulogies wherewith they are pleased to accompany the condemnation, which they pronounce on a system that they palpably do not understand—the phosphoric eloquence—the high-sounding oratory—the gorgeous imagination—the benevolent enthusiasm—in short the all but judgment and common sense which they so plentifully heap upon its author—We shall only say, that, whether their purpose be to gratify or to insult me, I shall never cease to lament, on a question so pregnant with weal or woe to the common people of Scotland, that such should be my unfortunate habits of phraseology, as, in the narration of an experiment the most testing and decisive ever made for the establishment of a great principle, the words I have employed should by so many have been otherwise regarded than as the words of truth and soberness.

37. One knows not well how to dispose of the utterly ridiculous and grotesque hypothesis, on which many would account for the success of our experiment in the parish of St John's—as if due to some mysterious and unapproachable power or

greatness on the part of the man who had devised it. Will they not believe the assertion of the man himself, that from the first month of its operation, after the system had been fairly set agoing, he had never once to do with the management of a single case of pauperism—but left it altogether in the hands of the Deacons, during the four years he was amongst them, so as to enable him to give his whole attention to such duties and preparations as were exclusively and altogether ecclesiastical? But if this make no impression upon them, what have they to say for the continuance of the system during the fourteen years between his removal and the termination of it, and when the office-bearers of the parish had nothing but the ghost of a departed greatness to deal with? Most assuredly I never was consulted, nor did I ever pen a single letter on any of the details or doings that were transacted throughout the whole of that period. But it would appear that the magical influence, which never in a single instance acted in the shape of a reality on the proceedings of those who actually conducted our system in Glasgow—still continues to haunt the imagination of its objectors. And accordingly in a recent public meeting, held in Edinburgh on the subject of pauperism when my system was brought into notice, it was treated as an inapplicable theory—which could not possibly be carried into effect, unless there was a Dr Chalmers in every parish to preside over and help forward the execution of it. And at a still more recent meeting of the British Association in Glasgow, where I appeared for no other purpose, than,

if possible, to repress the mischief which the views of Sheriff and Dr Alison on the one hand, along with those of Poor-law Commissioners from England on the other, had they met with no resistance, might have entailed on the much-loved people and peasantry of Scotland—the only possible way in which they could parry the stubborn experience of the parish of St John's, was by laying the whole burden of it on the shoulders of the same mighty and marvellous operator. Now really, if they will thus persist in magnifying the projector at the expense of his project, let me frankly tell them what the sort of greatness is which I am willing to accept at their hands—and I am sure you will allow it to be enough in all conscience, when I state that it is the same in kind, though immeasurably short in degree, of the greatness earned by the physician Harvey when he discovered the circulation of the blood. And yet when I think how very palpable the thing is, I cannot surely be said to have discovered before all other men, that internal action, or internal circulation as it may be called, which takes place within the body politic of a parish—either when a man's own wants tell on his own strenuousness, whether to prevent or to provide for them; or when the wants of others tell on the urgent sympathy both of relatives and friends, to the effect of calling forth a spontaneous flow of charity for the object of relieving them. It is quite impossible that I could have been the first to see these things; but I will admit it possible that I may have been the first to place such firm reliance on the working of these natural principles,

and to count upon them or reason upon them so confidently as I have done, in this question of pauperism. I would scarcely have ventured on claiming even thus much, had it not been for the obvious necessity under which the adversaries of our system have placed me, of partitioning the matter fairly and aright between the scheme itself and the inventor of the scheme. For mark the egregious folly of that most egregious misconception into which they have fallen, in their eagerness to account for the success of our experiment. Why they accredit me with a great deal more, than even the fondest worshippers of genius ever dreamed of ascribing to the celebrated Harvey—not only that I discovered the circulation, but that, somehow or other, to me belongs the secret virtue of upholding the circulation—having set it agoing at the first; and afterwards when I had consigned my patient into other hands, having by some spell or sorcery before unheard of, kept it agoing for no less than fourteen years—five of which I spent in St Andrews, and nine in Edinburgh, unknowing all the while of every case that occurred in the pauperism of St John's, or of the treatment bestowed by my Deacons on any one of them. I knew that with them the concern was safe—satisfied with the experience they had already given, and sure that the system would go on prosperously and well so long as they kept it in their hands. But neither I nor they were the efficient causes of this prosperity. It was due to the working of an inner mechanism implanted by the hand of nature within every aggregate of human beings, the move-

ment of which was no more due to us, than it was a touch from the finger of Harvey which gave impulse to the circulation of the blood. Our Deaconship formed more a corps of observation than of positive agency. Doubtless, they warded off an influence which disturbed, and even did somewhat to stimulate, the healthful operation of those internal processes, which naturally and of themselves, take place within the body politic of every parish—just as a physician might withhold the food which impedes, or apply the medicine which promotes the healthful circulation that takes place in the body personal of every human creature. But the processes themselves were neither originated nor sustained by us. The contrary allegation implies a homage to our powers, which, knowing it to be untrue, we must in all honesty reject—and without any great mortification of natural vanity; for, considering the gross unintelligence of the quarter whence it comes, it is impossible that either they or I can be in the least flattered by it.

38. It is with satisfaction that I reflect on the offer publicly made by me, at the last meeting of the British Association, and in the hearing I understand of some of the highest civic functionaries in Glasgow. I engaged to resume the process either in St John's or in any other parish, where I might be permitted to set up the requisite arrangement—provided that the conditions were granted which I asked and were denied me on behalf of the former undertaking—that is, the same protection from the poor of Glasgow, which is secured

by law against the poor of all other parishes; and a deliverance from the general assessment, so soon as we supported all our own poor upon our own resources. This offer I now reiterate; and, if not accepted by the public and official men of Glasgow, will I trust be accepted by all others as a sufficient practical reply to any objections against our scheme which may ever proceed from that quarter in all time coming. Nothing can exceed the confidence, up in fact to moral certainty, wherewith I should look on such a retracing process set up in any of the Extension Parishes of that city—on the peculiar condition, however, to meet the peculiarity of its circumstances, that the minister should be so endowed as to be at liberty for acting on the parochial system of seat-letting; and be enabled to admit into his church all the parishioners either rent-free, or at such a rent as would not exclude the humblest of his families. It is not saying enough for the perfect facility of such an enterprise when compared with that of St John's, to speak of the two thousand instead of twelve thousand people, and, of course, the six times fewer cases of pauperism. Neither is it enough to speak of the perfect facility, wherewith an adequate ecclesiastical staff, both of elders and deacons, could be found, for a so much smaller number of families. Of immensely greater consequence is it than either of these, that the minister is provided not with a general but a local congregation, so as to have hearers of his own in every street and alley, perhaps in every house of his parish—and so as to obtain both for himself and

his office-bearers a moral ascendancy in his own quarter of the town, which, with not one per cent. of parishioners in my day's congregation, I never could acquire. Its success were infallible; and the achievement done by him might be done piecemeal in every other territory—so as at length to clear away the legal and compulsory provision of charity from our borders. In other words, by the energies of our parochial system alone, the extension of our church might soon be followed up by the extinction of our pauperism. This is the moral administration wherewith I would confront, and would set in opposition to, the pecuniary administration of Dr Alison. Even though the requisite schools and churches under our system should require two hundred thousand pounds a-year for their support, this is but a fourth part of the sum demanded for upholding the expenditure of the other system. But the merit of these rivals should not be estimated in money. The one, of itself, will not raise the people in the scale of comfort, while in the scale of character it will immeasurably degrade them. The other by the omnipotence of moral causes alone, will enlarge the sufficiency of the working classes, and give the nation her best and cheapest safeguard in a well-trained, virtuous and orderly population to the bargain.

39. But the offer which I gave some months ago, and have repeated now, will still be unheard. I have had too long experience of the stubborn incredulity of men hackneyed in the usages of an old system, to be sanguine either of their acceptance or co-operation in behalf of a new one. My last

and only hope, gentlemen, lies with yourselves—the present expectants and future ministers of the parishes of Scotland. I had fondly calculated that my departure from Glasgow might have dissipated an illusion, which my presence there only served to foster every year into greater strength and inveteracy. I now believe that my views will not be carried into practical fulfilment till after my departure from the world—when, perhaps, in the vigour of your manhood, and amid the labours of an unwearied well-doing, the testimony I have now given may not be forgotten by you.*

Section V.—*Ethical View of the Question.*

1. The brevity, which I now feel to be imperative, will compel me to limit myself greatly in the remaining heads of this argument, so as to present but a slight and synoptical view of certain topics, each of which to be fully handled would require a large and laborious dissertation.

2. The fundamental question in the ethics of this subject is, whether every man has a right to subsistence—whether, in virtue of his bare existence, he has a claim in equity against all his fellows

* See Christian and Economic Polity, Vol. II. p. 47, being Vol. XV. of the series—for a description of the process by which any assessed parish of Scotland may trace its way out from the Compulsory System, and be reconducted to that old method of supporting the poor which still obtains in the majority of our Scottish parishes.

for the necessaries of life, should he from any cause stand in want of them. At present we dare not enter upon this question, but will simply refer to what we have already written on it.* All I shall say now is, that I hold the allegation of such a right to be at variance with what is felt by all men at the first dawning of a natural jurisprudence within them—and more particularly, that it is incongruous with that which takes place at the origin of property, and when the feeling of property is first formed. It proceeds on the radical error of confounding two virtues which are substantively and specifically distinct from each other—the virtues of justice and humanity; and devolves on the first of these that office which God and Nature designed for the second of them. The appropriate remedy for the evils of want is to be found, not in the justice of men, but in the compassion of men. Law, by traversing this economy, has over-stepped her own limits; and the violence thus inflicted by her, both on the ethical system and on the constitution of human nature, does not stop there, but works derangement and disorder on the outer field of human society.

3. And let it here be remarked, that there is a strong and palpable inconsistency between England's doctrine and England's practice upon this subject. If a pauper really have the same claim in right and equity to relief that a servant has to

* See our view of the origin of Property in Chapter III. Book IV. of our Natural Theology, and more especially an extract from Chapter IV. of the same book, at pp. 117—120. and pp. 131—134 of the volume, being Volume II. of the series.

wages, why treat the two claims so differently? It seems a strange way of meeting a demand for justice, that, when a man prefers it, he must be put into confinement, separated from his home, subjected to the irksome and galling restraints of a prison discipline. Such are the correctives, by which, under their reformed Poor-law, it is attempted to redress the evils of its former administration. The assertion of what their own statute-book declares to be a right is followed up by the same treatment, in kind at least if not in degree, with the commission of what the same statute-book declares to be a wrong. In other words, their paupers are met by the same treatment with their felons. The same terrors and penalties have been devised to prevent the undue multiplication of the one class, as to prevent the undue multiplication of the other. Lest men should perpetrate crimes with an inconvenient frequency, jails and gibbets have been erected in all parts of the country; and lest men should put forth claims (and of that class too which they acknowledge to be rightful) with inconvenient frequency—not gibbets, but at least houses nearly as repulsive as jails have been erected in all parts of the country. The truth is, they have been made as repulsive as possible for the very purpose of scaring applicants away. It was found of the law in its old state, that it tended to agrarianism, and would have at length obliterated all the fences by which property is guarded. And hence a new law which retained the old principle, but changed the old practice—the principle being that every human creature in want has a right to

relief; and the practice being as if though this be a right, it were a very wrong thing in either man or woman to assert it. And so they attempt to steer evenly in this matter, by what mathematicians would term a compensation of errors. Meanwhile a vehement, but most natural outcry, has arisen in many parts of England—provoked we have no doubt, in the contemplation of this new system, by the utter incongruity between its character and its name—a system of harshness, in the guise or at least with the title of a system of charity. How far the asperities between the higher and lower classes, consequent on such a state of things, may endanger the stability of the commonwealth, it is impossible to say. But we should rejoice, if our sister country were to get out of this her false position as speedily as possible; and, for this purpose, that she abated somewhat of her confidence and pride in the wisdom of her own legislation. It might even not be undesirable, that she let down a little of that contempt, which both her public and literary men have so often expressed for Scottish metaphysics—and that, learning to discriminate between the things which differ, she might henceforth give unto justice the things of justice, and unto humanity the things of humanity.

4. What calls forth the honest indignation of Englishmen against their new Poor-law, is, not that it repels the undeserving—that may be a real improvement—but that it will far more surely repel the deserving poor, who are either forced to accept of its provisions with all the accompanying humiliations and restraints; or if deterred by these, fall

back on a society where the natural, if not wholly dried up, is at least very much withered and enfeebled by the legal charity—the very existence of which lessens the felt obligation of relatives and friends to look after either their distressed neighbours or their unfortunate kinsfolk. It is a sense of this which has led to the benevolent proposal of the Rev. Herbert Smith,* that, for the latter description of poor, alms-houses should be erected, with more of comfort and liberty and decent respect, than can possibly be awarded in work-houses open to the destitute of all kinds and all characters; and far more likely to be occupied by desperadoes and drunkards, than by the children of a legitimate and virtuous poverty who possess an unqualified claim on the sympathies of all. I think that this excellent person—an able and discerning as well as generous philanthropist—must admit of our parochial system, that it effects that very discrimination between the deserving and undeserving poor, the want of which he so justly and feelingly deplores, as being the greatest defect of the English Poor-law. I wish I could persuade him of the all but perfect security which there is, that, in every parish constituted as we would have it, no case of genuine suffering can escape observation; and, when made known, will unlock effectual sympathies for the relief and right disposal of it. And on this subject we are glad to perceive a breaking of light in England—not only from the publications

* See the Poor Man's Advocate, with an account of his Chaplainry, and other Tracts by the Rev. Herbert Smith, Chaplain to the New Forest Union Workhouse, Hants.

and tracts of Mr Smith, but still more decisively, from two recent articles in the British Critic furnished by Mr Bosanquet of London, and who I trust will both prosecute his argument further and present it with his name to the world.* We look on the latter of his articles in No. LVI. of the British Critic, as altogether a masterly exposure of the evils of that legal and artificial system of charity which obtains in England. The administration of relief from a church fund, placed under the management of district visitors, is the very system that we want to see restored in Scotland; and which, if established in England, would work out the same deliverance there from the necessity of resorting to any compulsory fund for the relief of indigence. Would that the eyes of a British Parliament were at length opened to the necessity of such a radical change in their management of the poor; and, in particular, that every obstacle were removed, which, in the present state of the law, lies in the way of its introduction to such parishes as might desire a separate and independent economy of their own.† Our only fear is, that the first administrators of such a parochial fund might for a time at least misconceive wherein it is that the virtue of it lies—not most assuredly in its own magnitude, thereby enabling its dispensers to give largely and liberally throughout the parish; but far more

* Mr Bosanquet has since done this, in a work entituled "Rights of the Poor."

† For my views on the Parliamentary treatment of this question see Christian and Economic Polity, Vol. II. chap. XV. or Vol. XV. of the series.

in the effect of their right moral suasion throughout the little communities over which they severally expatiate, and in the lessons given fearlessly yet in a friendly spirit both of self-respect and of mutual kindness—so that by the labour of their own hands, along with their helpfulness to each other, all may be as little burdensome as possible. It is not to a large fund in the hands of careless, but to a small fund in the hands of wise and vigilant office-bearers, that we should look for a general elevation in the comfort as well as habits of our parish families—under the guidance of men walking among their fellows in the spirit of a genuine and heart-felt, yet considerate philanthropy; and who would rejoice in it as their best achievement, that all the poverty of their districts had been either anticipated or met, because, under their surveillance, industry had been restored to its healthful play, and the fountains of natural charity had been opened.

5. And this is the right place for again saying, though it has been already said and proved a thousand times over, that the ethics of our system are grievously misunderstood by those who would so represent it, as if we expunged benevolence from the list of virtues. This is not only not the truth. It is the converse of the truth. It is only under such an economy as ours that benevolence is restored to scope and liberty; and again breaks forth in ways manifold though unseen throughout the countless ramifications of human society. But though it be a process, which, as lying in the deep interior of every mass and aggregate of human

families, does not force itself on observation, nay has escaped altogether the view of the cursory and superficial—yet is it capable of being traced, and has been, when, in consequence of any outcry raised against our system, a strict reckoning and inquisition were called for, in order to its vindication—when it will be found, that, on cases of distress and destitution being made authentically known, the want or withdrawment of the public allowance is greatly more than replaced by the forthgoings of a spontaneous humanity.* Insomuch that it lies open to objections, and has actually been assailed by these, from a quarter directly opposite to the former —that in such instances, benevolence is generally too exuberant, and its supplies are often overdone. It is a little hard to be thus placed between two fires—a weeping sentimentalism on the one hand, which pleads for a legal and compulsory provision on the ground that without it the poor would starve; and then, after we had experimentally proved that in virtue of its abolition the poor are better off, there comes in a heartless utilitarianism, which pleads for the same compulsory provision, on the ground, that of the two systems of charity, the legal and the natural, the former is the less expensive. Nevertheless we hold this more copious breaking forth of the natural fountains, on the extinction of the great artificial reservoir, when there is the setting up of a right parochial economy, to be one of its most beautiful

* See No. I. in our list of instances Vol. III. p. 189, of Christian and Economic Polity, or Vol. XVI. of the series.

effects; nor can we in the least defer either to the misplaced indignation or to the blind though honest sympathy of those, who are now arguing for the extension of a system that supersedes or at least relaxes far better securities for the relief of human wretchedness than itself can substitute in their room—and of which it may be emphatically said, that, but follow out its principles to their final landing-place, and it will make all rich men poor and all poor men poorer than before.

6. We most freely admit of the spontaneous, that it is more expensive than the legal system of charity; and this we hold to be, not its shame, but its glory. It is our clear and confident assurance, that, could the now unseen charities which pass and repass throughout even the humblest vicinities of our land, be all ascertained and counted up, they would present an aggregate, which might well put to the blush the pretension and pomp of all our institutes. We speak of the charity which reciprocates within, amongst next-door neighbours —not of that which comes from without, and, though administered by the hands of the affluent, is but an insignificant fraction of the other. And here we are met by a distinct objection, as if we burdened the poor by leaving them to support each other, and let off the wealthy. We would not burden the poor; but neither would we wrest from them the high moral prerogative of having a share, and a truly noble and important share it is, in the great work of beneficence. And neither would we let off the wealthy; but urge upon each in his own

sphere wisely and liberally to provide for the objects which lie within his reach, even as God has given him the ability. There is a certain Quixotic almonry, by which an occasional philanthropist from the higher classes has been known at times to make invasion on the sphere of others; and, by seducing the poor from their proper duties, might scatter among their dwelling-places the elements of moral deterioration. This we should certainly repress. Yet could we find abundant use for him notwithstanding. It were not beyond his province for example, were he qualified for the task, to assume a deaconry—or to become the moral and economical superintendent of a district. We could even draw a little upon his wealth, when some extreme cases of misfortune in a parish require extreme efforts to be made for them; and not a little, but fully as much as would fully equalise the amount between him and all who are poorer than himself—when the largest sums and subscriptions which can be realized are needed, for the objects whether of health or education. Still we have the utmost affection, as well as utmost value, for the benevolence of littles, for the humble offerings of the common people; and we hold that to be a false humanity, which, in order to spare them a sacrifice, would forego the spectacle of that moral worth and moral greatness, which even a widow's mite cast into the treasury might suffice to indicate. Of however little account their unnoticed contributions, whether in the shape of succour or service, may hitherto have been, we must

ever contend—that, in losing these, we should, as might be demonstrated in various ways,* lose our very best auxiliaries to the cause of benevolence. Yet most assuredly when we thus speak, it is not for the exoneration of the wealthy, who, we doubt not, in the circle of their own immediate dependants, have high claims upon them—openings for a liberality as unbounded as their means, and which form the special and befitting opportunities for them to acquit themselves of their own full proportion in the work of charity. Let us never fear a want of adequate objects and occasions for their discipline too in the school of self-denial; or that there is any lack of sufficient calls upon their munificence, whether as landlords or masters or the grandees of their respective vicinities, or the natural patrons both of expectant relatives and friends—in whose reverses of various fortune Providence will bring innumerable applications to their door, and devolve upon them the large and onerous duties of a stewardship, all the more responsible the greater the property is, which may have been confided by the hand of God to their administration. Let it not be said then, that we would exact from the poor in order to excuse or exempt the opulent. We rejoice alike in the contributions of both; and when in the same subscription-paper, we see blended the halfpennies of the one and the golden donatives of the other, we cannot but regard it as the precious record of a common

* See our Tracts and Essays in Vol. XII. of the series—and more especially the one entituled—On the Influence of Parochial Associations.

effort and common understanding between high and low—which, if enough brought into exercise, would prove the best guarantee of a harmonious and happy commonwealth.

7. On benevolence, genuine heartfelt benevolence, having for its object the greatest good of the poor, and willing for every sacrifice to attain it—on such benevolence if under the guidance of wisdom and principle, and, did it but *consider* as well as compassionate—we should lay no restraint whatever. And here, with respect to the alleged liberality of our deacons in St John's, let me notice the artificial restraint by which it was necessarily limited and kept down. It might have been indulged to a ten-fold greater degree; but it was not safe, while we lay open to the inroads of all the poor in Glasgow. Had we obtained the protection we were so earnestly set upon—the same protection from the parishes in the royalty, that we had by law from all other parishes beyond it—we could have been greatly more free-handed both to our paupers and our poor—to those already on the roll, as well as to those who had not yet incurred the degradation. Even as it was, we did stimulate the importation from other places to an extent that was very inconvenient. But for this, we should have felt ourselves at large for the work and labour of love in all its varieties; and even, under all our disadvantages, we had enough of experience to convince us how possible nay easy it were, for the ecclesiastical office-bearers of a parish, if only emancipated from law and put into a state of nature and liberty—how practicable it

were, by a series of cheap attentions and without any romantic surrender either of time or money, to raise the economic condition of its families.

8. The deacons of our small localities, it must be obvious, can discriminate far better among their well-known families, between the deserving and undeserving poor—than can the guardians of the extended unions in England. But what is far more decisive, mark the effect of the two discriminations. With our system, when fully carried out, the practical result were a full measure of relief for the deserving, with a leaving out of the undeserving poor. With their system when fully carried out, the practical result is that the undeserving, the men of hardihood, who can brook the indignities of a work-house and the violence there done to the feelings of relationship, are all taken in—while the deserving are revolted and scared away. This is the unavoidable consequence of their system—from the very nature of their discriminating test—a system of repulsion rather than of relief; and no wonder at the strong and general feeling among the benevolent in England of some grievous want, as if the business of charity were undone—when, in fact, all the proper objects and characteristics of charity have been totally reversed. We are quite aware, that, along with this, there have been innumerable testimonies of satisfaction with their new Poor-law—but distinction ought to be made between satisfaction with it as a measure of protection and police, and satisfaction with it as a measure of genuine effectual and productive philanthropy. They have certainly fallen on a

better way of disposing of those worthless self-created and immoral poor, who were so patronised and multiplied under their old system; and their houses of confinement and isolation may serve well for the correction of these—thus occupying a sort of intermediate place between alms-houses and gaols. In other words, as prisons are the befitting receptacles for English criminals—so these poor-houses seem to have been constituted as the most befitting receptacles for English blackguards, for those whose offences are not cognoscible nor punishable by law, yet whose habits render them at once a burden and a nuisance to society. And perhaps they accomplish this end, but then let them not be styled houses of charity; nor, by the usurpation of this sacred name, let the generous and large-hearted people of England be deluded into the imagination, that such a scare-crow economy as this can be at all a substitute (we fear it is too often pled as an apology) for one of the best and greatest of the christian virtues—which is kindness to the poor. At all events, let not Scotland be visited by an infliction so fearful. All we require for our people is an adequate ecclesiastical with an adequate educational system. Having this, we shall stand in no need of those pauper bastiles—or any half-way houses whatever between our churches and schools on the one hand, and our bridewells or places of correction on the other. With a sufficiently thick-set parochial apparatus, whether in town or country—all our deserving poor will be carefully provided for; and the undeserving more effectually shamed out of their habits

by the remonstrances of church office-bearers, and the natural indignation of neighbours in their respective localities, than by all the terrors and penalties which the most rigorous of Poor-law Commissioners can devise.

Section VI.—*Scriptural view of the Question.*

1. Over and above two distinct tithes—one for the maintenance of ecclesiastical persons, and another for the support of certain religious festivals—the Jews had a third tithe (δευτερον επιδεκατον) levied however only every third year,* for the Levites and strangers and widows and fatherless. It does not appear that the poor of all classes were admitted to the benefit of this latter provision; or that mere general indigence, however come by, was sustained as being a sufficient title or qualification for a share in it. Certain it is, that in the case of their ordinary poor, whether they had been reduced to this state by misfortune or by improvidence, we read of no other compulsory provision than the third tithe now mentioned, and which seems to have been expended for the maintenance of that more limited destitution, which arises from the specific causes of widowhood or orphanage—while, on the other hand, we read of their being subjected to a compulsory service, should they have fallen into debt—liable even to be sold by their creditors, and to undergo both in their own

* Deut. xiv. 22—29; xxvi. 12—14.

persons and those of their children, the degradation and hardships of a state of slavery, for a period of longer or shorter duration.

2. But even though it could be made out, that the produce of this Hebrew tithe for the poor lay open to the claims and applications of all, who might have fallen anyhow into a state of indigence—it deserves well to be remarked, how little in common there is between such an institute and the modern Poor-law of England. To lay aside a certain fixed sum, a definite fraction of the country's wealth, which shall lie open to the claims of its existing destitution whatever that may chance to be—is to place things on a footing truly different, from that of laying open the whole property to the encroachments of a destitution which the system itself is fitted to encourage; and which encroachments can only be repressed by a discipline of vigilance and vigour, whereby these two great parties in the commonwealth, the payers and the receivers, are brought into the state of natural enemies to each other. We do not wonder at the rigours of the English Poor-law, because were its principle of a compulsory provision left free to work out its natural effects, the poverty of the country would run a race upon its property and speedily overtake it. It was not thus under the Hebrew economy—which differed as widely from the one under consideration, as did the old commons of England from the system of its pauperism. A certain given amount of property, whether in the land itself or in a stated proportion of its produce, set apart for the common good of the poor—

differs *toto cælo* in operation and effect, from that system which turns the whole land into a common object of competition and demand for the population, who, in order to make perpetual advances on it, have only to relax all their own better habits, and become indefinitely more reckless or more profligate than before. Under the one system, there is a certain given possession for the poor, but along with this as certain and secure a possession for the owners of all other property. Under the other system, there is no such defence against the wide and general exposure of all the wealth in the country to demands that are quite indefinite, which is thus placed in a state of fearful precariousness —either laid at the mercy of the general population, or so protected from their inroads as to fire their hearts with a sense of injustice. And certain it is, that if the real good of the community could be so provided for, the interest of the middle and higher classes is but as dust in the balance, when put into competition with the well-being of a commonalty that greatly outnumbers both. Yet when we turn to the contemplation of the Jewish polity, we cannot but recognise there the manifestations of that superior wisdom which provides best, and without clashing or competition between them, for the interest and security of all the classes. To realize the conception of what this policy was, we might figure one of our modern parishes whether in England or Scotland, with a thirtieth part of its annual wealth allocated to the paupers specified by the Mosaic law—the chief of which was the support of the widow and the father-

less. The temptation to improvidence is incalculably less in such a state of things, than when all the current poverty, however it may have been contracted, and simply if it exist, meets and by right of law with its immediate relief. Nay though by the law of Judea, all other poor beside the widow and the fatherless, had been vested with a right of participation in the thirtieth of the produce—there are certain wholesome influences brought into play under such an economy, which the law of England, that extends this right over the whole land and houses of a parish, is utterly fitted to extinguish. In the latter case, it is a competition of the poor against the rich—in the former, a competition of the poor against each other. There might be no remorse felt by the common people in drawing indefinitely on the opulent above them. But there would be remorse, there would be a strong moral restraint, there would be a fellow-feeling and generous consideration for the children of a heavier misfortune than their own, could it be made palpable to their senses, that, in virtue of their forbearance, all cases of extreme helplessness would be more amply provided for. What we contend for is, that, under such a regimen, the popular sympathy and consent could most easily be enlisted on the side of a right and equitable administration. Let this bible provision be only administered in each separate parish on bible principles; and the business even of public charity might be conducted without any of the deleterious influences of our modern pauperism. The governors and governed might be

made both fully to understand and fully to co-operate with each other. Throughout the great bulk and body of the parish, the families would, by a spontaneous principle of their own, keep aloof from the parochial fund—and that for the sake of a more abundant ministration to those preeminent in distress, whose signal and undoubted calamity all men saw and all sympathized with. They utterly misconceive human nature, who think it were a difficult or Utopian achievement, to inoculate the community of every manageable district with the *esprit de corps* that we have now been describing—in which case, the widows, the fatherless, the needy and deserving wanderers, the teachers of youth now in place of the Levites in Judea, might be sufficiently cared for—in other words, all the special objects designed in the Old Testament for this special provision, might be fully secured. Nay we can imagine a surplus expended on such uses, as would make it still more a point of emulation and honour among the families, so to strive on the one hand and so to save on the other—that they might be as little burdensome, and the surplus for good and public objects be left as large and entire as possible—the objects, for example, of drainage, or ventilation, or a spacious play-ground for children, or walks and gardens for the community at large, or the privilege of admission to the best medical institutes—all which things ought to be provided for, and may be provided for, with no relaxation of self-dependence, and no risk of moral deterioration among the people, nay, with the very opposite effects:

And who can deny that the objects now specified, are those on which a thirtieth part of the country's annual wealth might be most beneficially expended? What a blessed commutation for England, did she exchange her present system for a polity so bland and so free from the alloy of every hurtful influence as this. And in its beneficent operation, what a practical and living testimony should we obtain for that word which is the repository of all wisdom—after that the blunders of modern legislation, and even the speculations of modern science, had come to be alike superseded by the political economy of the bible.

3. But for doing full justice to the scriptural view of our question, it will be necessary that we should come down to the methods and maxims of the New Testament. A public provision for the poor is coeval with the first institution of a christian church—for we no sooner read of the great conversion that took place on the day of Pentecost, than we are told of them who believed, that "they had all things common, and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men as every man had need." It is true that the persecutions which afterwards arose soon created a special necessity for the continuance of such a fund. But we must not therefore regard it as a thing of local and temporary obligation, thus to collect the alms of the faithful, and make distribution of the produce amongst the poor members of the congregation. We cannot disguise it, that a strong sanction is given by the practice of apostolic times, to at least one system or form of public charity. It is

an important lesson, that a visible though a voluntary fund for the relief of the destitute is as old as Christianity itself; and other lessons no less important may be gathered, by attending to the principles on which the administration of it was conducted.

4. The next notice which occurs of this fund is in the sixth chapter of the Acts. The apostles, it would appear, had, up to this time, been personally engaged in the ministration of it. This they at length felt to be an undue encroachment, on the time and strength which should be wholly given by them to the higher labours of the sanctuary—to "prayer and to the ministry of the word." They complained of it as unreasonable, that they should continue to be implicated with a management which forced them "to leave the word of God"—not, however, that they wished this business of public charity to be left undone, but that it should be devolved upon others. And accordingly "seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom," were, at their own suggestion, appointed to the charge of it. What an impressive rebuke lies in this simple narrative on those clergymen of our modern day, who, in attendance on various benevolent institutes—the offices of which should all be filled and the duties executed by others—consume that precious time which should be given altogether to the work of their own more appropriate ministry, to the care and culture of their neglected parishes. By the latest census of which we read, previous to this resignation of the apostles, the number of Christians amounted to five thousand

—in the spiritual guidance and guardianship of whom, did these twelve gifted and inspired men find enough of scope for all their energies. Place in contrast with this, the way in which the moral surveillance of our city multitudes is now provided for—when an equal, often a larger number, than the whole congregation of the apostles, is devolved on one helpless individual, overwhelmed to the bargain with countless secularities and secondary duties, for the performance of which other men than ministers of the gospel ought to be found. But the lesson does not stop here. If the spiritual charge of a few thousands formed a commensurate task for twelve apostles, who rejected all other work that they might "give themselves continually" to the execution of it—surely the spiritual charge of a few hundreds might well suffice for one of those assistant church office-bearers, whose business it is to second and supplement the labours of the minister; and who, generally, can spare but a few fragments of his time for the families of his assigned district. In other words, there ought too to be a disseverance of all secularities from the eldership; and in this remarkable passage do we not only find a scriptural warrant for an order of deacons to look after the poor—but the strongest possible argument, backed by all modern experience, for the practical necessity of that separation among duties and offices for which we have all along contended.

5. But a still greater lesson may yet be learned. If the procedure of the twelve apostles in resigning the management of the poor's fund, and that in

order to keep their time entire for spiritual labours, be pregnant with inference—still more pregnant with inference is a reverse procedure of the apostle Paul's. Though the most varied and the most abundant in the work of the apostleship amongst all the first teachers of Christianity, the care of all the churches being upon him—yet did he give up a large portion of his apostolic time to other employments, and so far abstract himself from the peculiar work of the ministry—not to assist the office-bearers of the church in the distribution of its public charity, for thus would he have contradicted the principle on which his colleagues had acted before him—but for the very opposite purpose of teaching by his own example the members of the church, that to the uttermost of their power they should abstain from making demand on its public charity. And so he set himself down to the occupation of a tent-maker (Acts xviii. 3); and this he himself tells us, for the enforcement of a great moral lesson—even that men should by their own hands minister to their own necessities, and to those who are with them, striving to be givers rather than receivers, (Acts xx. 34, 35.) "For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us; for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you; neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you: not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us. For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he

eat. For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies. Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread," (2 Thess. iii. 7—12.) It is certainly a most emphatic testimony to the worth of this lesson—That whereas the twelve apostles withdrew from the work of distributing the liberalities of the rich—the one apostle more burdened than them all under the multitude and weight of his ministerial engagements, yet at the expense of a far heavier encroachment both on his strength and his time, did he betake himself to the drudgeries of a common artizan, and that with the express design to enforce and exemplify a principle of virtuous and honourable independence among the poor. It shows most strikingly, that, with every effort then made for the relief of the necessitous, yet far dearer to the enlightened christian philanthropists of that age, was the moral integrity than the physical comfort of their disciples. Accordingly we find the most anxious directions given to exclude from all participation in this fund those sordid aspirants, who made a gain of godliness; and those lovers of their own ease, who would luxuriate in idleness at the expense of the society (1 Tim. v. 13); and those unnatural relatives who would exonerate themselves from the support of their own kindred, (1 Tim. v. 16.) And, last of all, let us hear the fell denunciation of the apostle, who would excommunicate from the name and privileges of a Christian, the man who would relieve himself from the

care of his family by drawing out of the general stock that maintenance which he was able but not willing to work for—"If any man provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith and is worse than an infidel," (1 Tim. v. 8.)

6. It thus appears, that, while in those days, the largest sacrifices were made by christian men for the relief of the poor, the chief anxiety of their inspired teacher was to provide against the risk of their moral deterioration. He knew them to be alike capable of moral greatness with those, who, in the scale of rank or wealth, were immeasurably above them; and we cannot figure a nobler exhibition than that of Paul's—when, for the avowed purpose of building up a virtuous heroism of character amongst the poor, he became a workman himself; and that in order to show to others of the same class, not only how to exempt themselves from the necessity of being receivers, but how, by the labour of their own hands, to support the weak and the indigent around them, (Acts xx. 35.) But with all this devotion to their truest interests, his sympathies and feelings had none of that sickly hue, which tinges the effusions, as well as sits on the visages of our modern sentimentalists. If a man would not work, he could leave him to the inflictions of nature and necessity; and with a just confidence in the wisdom of Nature's own discipline, thought it better not to interfere with those correctives and chastisements of hers, whereby she schools, and by means so severe as the agonies of hunger and the felt urgencies of self-preservation,

the otherwise wholly reckless votaries of dissipation and indolence. It is obvious, that, in the mind of our great apostle, character was all in all. With him it formed a main element of guidance in the rule which he prescribes for the distribution of the church's charity, (1 Tim. v. 9—16.) The efforts of the poor to ward off a dependence for the support of themselves and their families on aught but their own industry and good conduct, evidently rank in his estimation with the highest duties and obligations of the New Testament.*

7. Now thus armed, or under the direction of such principles as these, nothing I apprehend would be easier than a sound and beneficial management of the poor in every separate congregation—and that from the church offerings alone. But ours is a territorial establishment; and, with but a sufficient number of labourers, nothing we are confident would so prosper or be more practicable than a like management of the poor, and with the same description of fund too, in every separate parish. With a free discretion to regulate our allowances by the character of the applicant, and with a power of exclusion† on the principles of a right ecclesiastical discipline—we again

* See the following sermons upon this subject—Commercial Discourses v. and xi. in volume vi. of our series; and Sermons ix. and xii. of Volume XI. of the series, being of those delivered on Public Occasions.

† This is wholly overlooked by Dr Alison—else he would never have given us the argument of his Quaker correspondent, that security against starvation brings with it no improvidence—seeing that the members of his denomination are perfectly secured against this, and yet form the most provident and so the most prosperous class in society.

affirm, first, that it were impossible for any deserving poor to be neglected; and, secondly, that the undeserving will ultimately come to be better off, when made to feel the weight of those severities which are intended by the God of Nature to follow in the train of idleness, improvidence, and vice. Whether there shall be placed at our disposal a thirtieth part of the annual wealth of the parish, as under the Jewish economy; or the free-will offerings of the faithful collected once a-week,* as under the Christian economy—it should be no difficult achievement to make the liberalities of the rich and the necessities of the poor not only meet but greatly overlap each other. Only it is indispensable to this result, that the administrators of the parochial charity shall fear neither of these parties, and as little flatter either of them—but be at all times ready to make a firm and intrepid representation to both of the duties which respectively belong to them; and so as that the wealthy on the one hand shall in their dispensations be brought up to the pitch of a right liberality, and the poor on the other shall in their demands be brought down to the level of a right moderation. The genuine effect of Christianity is at length to work out this blissful consummation; and even now were the ecclesiastical system but restored to its wonted energies in Scotland, we should only be doing again what has been done already, did we in less than half a generation

* 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2. It is of mighty advantage to habituate the general population to these weekly contributions. See the reason of this in our Tract, in Volume XII. of the series, On the Influence of Parochial Associations.

realize the spectacle of happy and well-conditioned parishes all over the land.

Section VII.—*Medical View of the Question.*

1. We are not yet done with the political economy of the New Testament. On this subject there is a profoundness of wisdom in the doings of our Saviour as well as in the sayings of His apostles. We refer more especially to the difference of procedure observed by Him in His treatment of want and His treatment of disease. We read twice of a miracle of loaves for the purpose of feeding a multitude overtaken with hunger; but that when the people ran after Him a third time in the hope of another such miracle, He rebuked the sordid expectation and refused to perform it.* Now we can perceive no such reserve when application was made to Him, not for food but for health. We read of no instance in which He sent a diseased petitioner uncured or disappointed away from Him; but that when the maimed and the impotent folk and the blind and the dumb and the palsied and the lunatic came to Him, the invariable result is, that He looked at them, and had compassion on them, and healed them all. While so sparing in the exercise of

* See my Sermon, On the Example of our Saviour a Guide and an Authority in the Establishment of Charitable Institutions, which now occupies the place of the First Tract in my volume of Tracts and Essays, being Volume XII. of the series.

His supernatural powers, when called to put them forth in the capacity of an almoner—we know of no such limitation on their exercise in the capacity of a physician. Now it is quite obvious, that, after the commencement of His public ministry, the proceedings of our Saviour in the land of Judea must have had all the notoriety, and would, when the style and methods of His Benevolence came to be understood, have all the effect of a public charity. And, accordingly, the lesson which we have elsewhere attempted to draw from this part of His example is—that while it discountenances all public institutions for the relief of want, it affords us an encouragement and a sanction, when we propose that for the cure or the alleviation of disease, such public institutions might be multiplied to the uttermost.

2. Nor is it difficult to apprehend the principle of this distinction. A known provision for want, if it be want irrespective of character, is sure to create and multiply its own objects in every neighbourhood where it happens to be established—seeing that all who choose might make their way to it, by the accessible and inviting path of a little more indolence or a little more dissipation. It is not so with an asylum of disease, for which men will not qualify voluntarily—save in those cases of self-infliction, which are too rare and too monstrous, to be of any significancy in a practical argument upon the question. We cannot image therefore a more glaring violation of sound principle, than when heedless altogether of this discrimination, there is a loud and incessant call for

almshouses and places of refuge and other eleemosynary institutions in behalf of mere indigence; and along with this the most shameful abandonment and neglect of our medical charities.

3. Had this distinction been proceeded on, it might have saved England in the days of Elizabeth, and Ireland now, from what I cannot but regard as a great national calamity. We cannot wonder at the earlier of these two inflictions—perpetrated at a time when the principles of public charity were ill understood, or rather had not been studied or attended to at all. But it is ever to be regretted that the Government should have been precipitated into an Irish Poor-law, which has made no separation of what is noxious from what is innoxious in a legal provision, whether to mitigate or do away the ills of suffering humanity. In conversing with one of the most strenuous advocates for a national system of relief in Ireland, I made full explanation of what I would and what I would not do for the establishment of such a system—that is provide to the uttermost for all the disease which can best be treated in public institutions—such as infirmaries, and fever hospitals, and asylums for the dumb and the blind and the lunatic, and that not only as places of cure, but as places of comfort and perpetual harbourage to the incurable—leaving out at the same time the care of general indigence, not from the sympathies of the benevolent in private life, but from the interference of the legislature. My friend, one of the most eloquent and forcible writers on the side of a poor-law, assured me

that were full provision made for the objects I specified, it would be enough for Ireland. But his vigorous appeals and representations on the subject had been already penned, and of course without any reference to a principle of selection which he had never before heard of—though when once stated, its extreme obviousness carried his instant approbation. We have no doubt, that the influence of his testimony and his name gave additional momentum to the swell of that indiscriminate outcry, which at length extorted from Parliament a wholesale measure, charged with all the mischief of a grievous oversight. A commensurate system of medical charity would have proved a boon and unalloyed blessing to the population. But this vain attempt to provide a maintenance by law, will, by relaxing the better securities of Nature, but disorganize society the more, and so aggravate the distempers of that unhappy land.*

4. What we have now stated is but introductory to the further statement of the fears we at one time had for Scotland, and which are not yet wholly set at rest. A bill was lately in progress through Parliament, having for its *single* design the promotion of the public health, and especially among the lower classes of society—those, in particular, who are congregated together in the deep and dark and densely peopled recesses of our larger towns. We trust that it will fully compre-

* See our whole evidence on the Question of an Irish Poor Law, given before a Committee of the House of Commons, and printed in Vol. III. of our Christian and Economic Polity of a Nation, being Vol. XVI. of our series.

hend, at whatever expense, all the provisions which might contribute to the success of so beneficent a measure—as drainage, and ventilation, and the minimum size of houses, and the proper width of streets and alleys; and withal the establishment of a medical police for the removal of nuisances, and even a cheap if not rather a gratuitous supply of professional services for the general population. The object is truly admirable and free of all exception; and I therefore regretted all the more, when at first the proposed legislation was confined to England and Wales—leaving out Scotland. Yet it was then our firm belief that something was intended and in reserve for Scotland; and our question was, why not immediately instead of afterwards? There was an answer suggested by our fears, but which I hope now may be altogether visionary. England and Wales have their Poor-law already; and any further legislation for the poor of these countries, without touching on the indigence already provided for, might well confine itself to the article of health alone. And what we apprehended as forthcoming for Scotland, was, instead of a measure for health singly, a general measure of assimilation, by which to bring both parts of the island under one and the same regimen—at least so far as to insinuate the principle of an assessment for mere poverty, along with an assessment for health which shall extend to all our parishes; and thus in company with or under the cover of what is excellent, expose our beloved people to an admixture of the vile with the precious, or the importation of a hurtful ingredient,

that would prove the germ of an interminable and ever-growing mischief. Should in the further progress of our philanthropic legislation this calamity ever again stare us in the face, we trust that it will be arrested by the vigilance of an enlightened Scottish patriotism.*

5. This apprehension of ours was grounded on the effect which certain recent attempted demonstrations for what may be termed the *medical necessity of a poor-rate*, have had on the public imagination.† We choose to call it this rather than the public understanding—and that because of an egregious logical fallacy, which, under the disturbing influence of their fears, seems to have been wholly overlooked by the alarmists upon this question. We are not in the least qualified for any deliverance whatever on the exclusively medical part of this argument—though it cannot escape our notice, that professional and eminently scientific men, the only proper arbiters at this stage of the controversy, are nevertheless most widely and as yet most hopelessly at variance among themselves. It looks to us precipitate, and as savouring more of impulse than of sober judgment, to ground the portentous conclusion of a universal poor-rate on premises which are still disputed and therefore still doubtful. But although the premises were not doubtful, though we had a unani-

* After the weary and ineffectual contest of 25 years with public functionaries, I have no inclination for the renewal of it in my own person. Would that the warning now given told effectually upon younger and abler men.

† Chiefly Dr Alison's pamphlets, and Mr Cowan's Vital Statistics of Glasgow—also a pamphlet by Dr Alison of Tranent.

mous medical verdict in favour of Dr Alison's theory—even that destitution was not only the chief originator, but the chief propagator of fever, by laying the human frame more open to its contagion—we are not therefore obliged to acquiesce in any conclusion which speculative men might choose to graft upon them. Verily the premises may be altogether sound—yet a faulty syllogism may be constructed thereupon; and so a vicious conclusion be drawn out of it. Even though the major proposition in the reasonings of Dr Alison and his friends could be affirmed universally, it would not of itself form a sufficient basis for that inference, which he is now pressing with so much earnestness and zeal on the public acceptation. For when put into the syllogistic form it would run thus, All fever originates in and is multiplied by destitution, but destitution is lessened by a poor-rate, therefore fever would be lessened by a poor-rate. Now to arrive in safety at this conclusion, there must not only be a firm initial footing in the truth and goodness of the first or major proposition; but there must also be a warrantable soundness in the minor proposition or middle term, in order to have a safe stepping-stone. Now it is precisely here where the failure of these reasoners lies; and it is a failure for the repair or rectification of which all their medical science can be of no possible avail to them. For let it be observed, that, brief as the above syllogism is, it draws upon no less than two distinct sciences; and, ere it can be sustained, it must pass through the ordeal and have the sanction or consent of each of them. It is medical

science, and that alone, which has to do with the major proposition. But it is political economy, and that alone which has to do with the minor proposition; and ere we give ourselves up to the authority of these new advocates, and upon this new ground, for a poor-rate—we must make sure, not only that they are able physicians, but sound economists also. Truly it is not enough, to get safely and well at a landing-place on the other side, that we have a fair point of departure, a hard and unyielding bank on this side of the stream—should there be a precarious stepping-stone between them. There may be a confident outset, but withal a most lamentable *non sequitur*—a frail support, which, on their next movement gives way under them, when our hardy adventurers, instead of finding themselves on the opposite shore, are left floundering in the water.

6. It is always thus, when, with but the authority earned in one science, men step forth of its legitimate boundaries, and make unwarrantable invasion on another. The professors of the art medical did right, when they repelled the inroad of the old astrologers, who, skilled in the motions of the firmament, and assuming that the health as well as fortunes of men on the surface of this planet were somehow dependent on the relative positions and conjunctions of the planets which roll above us, regulated the treatment of their patients by the computations and reasonings which they made of certain mystic influences from on high. Yet they may have been good astronomers for all that, though very unsafe physicians. And

it is just as possible that good and able physicians may be very unsafe economists. They did well in warding off the incursion made upon their own territory. But let them not in turn, and by a sort of reverse astrology, make incursion on other sciences and other territories than their own. Their doctrine may be right or wrong, that destitution is both the origin and the active propagator of contagion; and that therefore its removal would operate as a preventive of fever. This is altogether their question, as lying within the province which rightfully belongs to them. But another question remains behind—whether the imposition of a poor-rate would operate as a preventive of destitution; and they, in taking this for granted, may be guilty of as egregious an assumption, as any ever made by a scholastic or visionary of the middle ages. We dispute not that Dr Alison of Edinburgh, and Dr Alison of Tranent, and Dr Cowan of Glasgow, and Dr Roberton of Manchester, may, one and all of them, be talented professional men, and among the highest of their order. And we as little dispute the possibility, that persons of their education and powers might become qualified for being as good judges and reasoners upon the one question as the other. We can only say that we perceive no symptoms of their having thus studied and thus prepared themselves in any of their writings. And on the contrary we have known physicians on their side of the controversy—that is calling out for a poor-rate—and who yet allow, that with all the attention they have bestowed on the causes of fever,

they have never so much as entertained, and that on grounds and considerations proper to the question, the causes or cure of pauperism. Now really and in good earnest, it is astrology come back again, if men, because of their proficiency in one science, are thus to be vested with a mastery and a jurisdiction over two. It is a subject which must be treated economically as well as medically, else—even though the verdict may have been entrusted to the best and ablest of our physicians—there is no security whatever against a lame and impotent conclusion at their hands. Meanwhile let not the public be hurried, by the impulse either of fears or feelings, into the same lame and impotent conclusion along with them. For even though it should be established, which it is far from being, that poverty is the specific cause of those large and frequent epidemical visitations of typhus which take place in towns, the question remains still unresolved, and I may add as far as they are medical controversialists who have taken part in the argument, still untouched upon—whether a poor-rate be indeed a specific cure for poverty.*

7. At the last meeting of the British Association held in Glasgow, Dr Alison gave a full exposition of his views; and his address on that occasion has been since published by him. Among the additional matters which he has there interspersed, there is a notice of myself, where he is pleased to express

* See the admirable discrimination and sound judicial sense of Mr Monypenny's observations on this subject in his Reply to Dr Alison.

his satisfaction at certain admissions made by me in favour of medical charities. If he conceive that these are recent admissions drawn forth for the first time, and in consequence perhaps of the new light then shed upon the argument, I have only to put him right by referring to various passages in certain works—some of them published as far back as twenty years ago.* But I cannot wonder at his ignorance of these, as it is obvious from what he has written formerly, that, like his brother who with himself utterly misconceives the working of the parochial system in St John's—that neither of these strenuous advocates for a poor-rate had ever read them. Nor is this to be marvelled at either—seeing that both of these truly excellent men have settled it between them, that, on the question of pauperism, the lights neither of reason nor experience have ever been consulted by me; and accordingly the one tells his readers that all I have done

* See the Christian and Economic Polity of a Nation, Vol. II. pp. 128—132. being Vol. XV. of the series—the first Tract of Vol. XII. of the series, written twenty-two years ago—Vol. I. of Political Economy, being Vol. XIX. of the series, p. 419—and more especially my printed Evidence before a Commons' Committee in 1830, in Vol. III. of the Christian and Economic Polity, pp. 373—376, being Vol. XVI. of the series.

I may here refer to a sermon published by the Archbishop of Dublin on Christ as a Guide and Example to us in matters of Public Charity, where the same principles are advocated which I have ventured to advance in the various works now specified. I beg to take this public opportunity of acknowledging to have received from the Archbishop a copy of this Sermon, with a note in his own hand-writing of thanks for having suggested the topic to him—a suggestion which came to him, I imagine, through the medium of this printed Evidence. I should not have adverted at present to the circumstance, but for the purpose of bringing before the minds of the Mr Alisons an authority in favour of my views whom perhaps they will have some respect for.

on this question has been under the impulse of an enthusiastic imagination, while the other tells them that in all I have said or written thereupon I have emitted nothing but flashes of oratory.

8. Nevertheless, and at the hazard of again calling forth these appellations, I must still persevere and continue to lift my warning voice against the fearful visitation which these gentlemen, in the eagerness of their miscalculating benevolence, so eagerly desire; and which, in conjunction with certain London associates the lovers of centralization, and its whole train of commissionerships and secretaryships and guardianships and directorships and assistantships, they in good earnest design for Scotland. I may well term theirs a miscalculating benevolence—for while the one brother tells us, and tells us truly, that, in every aggregate population of two thousand in the city of Glasgow, at the very least six thousand a-year is spent on intoxicating liquors alone; the specific remedy of the other for the distress and destitution of the lower classes in Scotland, is, that the annual sum of eight hundred thousand pounds should be raised, which would just afford six hundred a-year *ab extra* for the families of a locality, where the fund *ab intra* thrown away upon low dissipation is of ten-fold greater amount. The obvious question is, Whether the moral administration that would give a better direction to the expenditure of the latter and larger fund of Sheriff Alison, which exists within the parish, would not do more for the destitution and consequent disease of our cities, than the pecuniary administration from without of the former and far the lesser fund

of Dr Alison—but a humble fraction of the other. When this question was put, the reply it elicited from this truly estimable person, and which at once marked a heart teeming with sympathy, but a mind withal in which the lights of reflection and arithmetic were for the time suspended, was, that by thus dispensing with the fund *ab extra*, and drawing on the fund *ab intra*, I was making a proposition which when translated into plainer language was just that the poor should support the poor. This brings us to the *ne plus ultra* of reasoning; but while I henceforth must forego the hope of ever being able to satisfy this most amiable of men, or to silence his unfortunate advocacy of a measure fraught with a thousand evils to the people of our land, I will not forego the hope that under a better regimen they will yet emerge into a state of greater sufficiency and far more secure independence—and that, not at the expense of each other, but at the expense of the harpies and oppressors who now so cruelly tyrannize over them—pawnbrokers, and more especially those destroyers of all fulness and comfort in families, the keepers whether of whisky-shops or of gin-palaces.

Section VIII.—*Historical View of the Question.*

1. There is nothing which stands forth more patently to the eye of an observant traveller, than the different states of different populations, in re-

gard to their sufficiency and style of living, or the command which they have respectively over the necessaries and comforts of human existence. How wide the interval for example, whether it respect their food or dress or lodging, between the well-conditioned peasantry of Norway and the hordes of Kamtschatka—or between these last and most wretched of men the stragglers of Terra del Fuego, and the villagers of a Protestant canton in Switzerland. Within these extremes there are manifold varieties in the various countries of the world; and often is the diversity most palpable when they lie nearest to each other—as between the common people of England and Ireland.

2. There is one very obvious connexion, in the way of cause and consequence, which affords a sort of proximate or first explanation of this difference between one commonalty and another; and which is all the more easily given, that the general state of a people, in respect to comfort and style of living, admits of being illustrated by one particular instance. It is obvious, then, that the general habit of a family throughout the years of its future history, in regard of well or ill-conditionedness, will depend very much on its outset, or on the state of matters when it first took its commencement. Let us imagine of the parents, that, ere they would enter on the marriage union, they made it indispensable to have the means of a certain decent sufficiency—waiting perhaps till they had made sure of a given income, or till they had amassed a given adequate amount of materials and furniture to ensure there being dressed respectably and lodged

respectably. It is not difficult to perceive that the same demand for comfort, the same determination to make good a certain seemly and becoming status in society, the same right and respectable taste for the decencies as well as comforts of good living—in a word, the same reach of calculation and foresight, and the same resolute industry and good management, which enabled them to gain the level they had set their hearts upon—form altogether the best guarantees for their being able to maintain it. Now who does not see that such a style of comfort reached and realized in this particular way, necessarily implies a previous and corresponding style of taste or character on the part of those who make it good? If, speaking averagely of a population, they will not marry till they have won a certain command, by actual possession or the ability to purchase, over those various articles which compose the maintenance and accommodation of a family—this is tantamount to saying, that, on a certain mental habitude or affection, there historically depends in each individual case the economic state of one person or one household; and that, in proportion to the generality of this habit, be it high or low, shall we behold in the commonalty of any given land, an aggregate whether of well-conditioned or ill-conditioned families. Hence the importance of an element which now enters largely into the reasonings and views of Political Economists—we mean the standard of enjoyment in any country or nation. The standard of enjoyment is low in a country, if, as in Ireland, the people are willing to marry with nought but potatoes to feed,

and the merest hovel to shelter them; and high, on the other hand, if, as an indispensable preliminary to such a step, there must be the outfit of a snug and well-furnished tenement—with the possession of such an income, and the fair prospect of its continuance, as might warrant the reasonable hope of being able, and that on a respectable footing both as to food and clothing and even the occasional use of little luxuries, to meet the expenses of a coming family.

3. All this seems very obvious, whether the economists shall step forward to construct any speculation upon it or not. But, in point of fact, they have looked to this process, in the connexions and bearings of its various footsteps, and endeavoured to philosophize it. More particularly is their reasoning directed to the influence which a higher taste and more providential habit among the people must have on the postponement of their marriages; and then, availing themselves of the connexion between later marriages and smaller families, do they tell us of the dependence that obtains between the two elements—a higher standard of enjoyment, and a less excessive population. And indeed it must be obvious that this is a mutual dependence. If, on the one hand, a growing taste for the comforts and decencies of life must lead to fewer and less prolific marriages —on the other, the consequently smaller number of labourers, must, by lightening the competition for employment, tell beneficially on the labour market, in keeping up a higher rate of wages; and so enabling a population to make good that

larger sufficiency after which they aspire. It is truly a matter of profound interest, thus to mark how a commonalty can through the medium of their own collective will elevate their own status; and by force of character alone, or in virtue of a certain fixed determination, the result of their average inclinations and habits, can realize the very economic condition which generally and on the whole they have set their hearts upon. This at once points out the connexion (expressing it very generally) between the mental and the economical state of a country—or, in other words, tells us, that by operating a certain change upon the minds, we may operate a like change on the circumstances of the general population.

4. Now the all important question, with the view to a practical and beneficial result, is, What might this change be? There is one imagination which has grievously misled a number of reasoners —beside fastening a discredit on the whole of this argument by making it ridiculous; and this is that the requisite change on the minds of the people, and so as to enlist them in the cause of their own amelioration, is to put into their minds the philosophy of Malthus, or expound to them the evil of precipitate and the good of postponed marriages, and that on these depends either an excessive or a moderate population, and so a low or a high rate of wages. Now however sound, and however accordant with all experience, this theory might be—it is an utter misconception that it is a theory which must be studied and understood by the people, ere the process which it contemplates

can be entered on, and its effect on the national well-being can be exemplified or realized. In order to set it prosperously and efficiently agoing, it is not needed that a Malthus should arise to look reflexly on the process, and that with the view of philosophizing it. It has been exemplified in time past, and with a blissful effect on the state of the peasantry, long before he was ever heard of;* and, on the strength of other forces and other considerations than those fetched from any speculation of his, will it again be exemplified in future generations. For this purpose it is not necessary, that they who are to be the fathers and mothers of families, should read economic tracts or give attendance on economic lectures. If we want to introduce a new habit among the common people of a land, it were truly a most absurd and grotesque way of going about it—to tell them either of its result universal throughout society at large, or of the result to which it is ripening, and will at length be perfected in distant ages. It is not by generalities, or by far ulterior prospects of this kind that man is put into motion; but by the palpable and besetting realities, which minister direct to the gratification of his own individual taste, or which visibly and immediately tell on his own individual condition. We may accomplish the desirable change by shifting the personal tastes and inclinations of the people—for we may count with all safety on each man doing what he would like best for himself. But it were the ex-

* See the Christian and Economic Polity of a Nation, Vol. I. pp 36—38, being Vol. XIV. of the series.

cess of Utopianism to attempt such a change, by presenting them with any comprehensive survey, however just and well-founded, on the doctrine of population and the doctrine of wages—for we shall indeed be wholly out of our reckoning, if we count on each man doing what he would like best for the species.

5. How then is the desired change in the tastes and habits of the commonalty to be brought about? There can be no mistaking the fact of a higher style of living, a higher standard of enjoyment in one country than in another—in virtue of which there obtains a stronger preventive check, in the way of too early or too frequent marriages—which last in its turn (and that whether the people ever anticipate such a consequence or not), by its effect on population and wages, ensures a favourable state of the labour market, and so upholds from age to age the spectacle of a well-paid and well-conditioned peasantry—who, without one idea of the economic law ever entering their heads, may nevertheless be themselves the means or instruments for keeping it in operation. Their larger demand for the comforts and respectabilities of life tells as a restraint on improvident marriages, and so as to postpone them in a greater or less degree; and, on the other hand, this elevation in their demand proceeds from circumstances which can be assigned as having palpably and immediately to do with it. For example, should commerce arise and increase in any nation, then, by the very presentation of its new articles, does it create new tastes among the people; and so varies

or extends their appetite for enjoyment.* And then when, along with commerce, there springs up a stronger sense of justice between man and man, till there come to be firmly established among them the regimen of equitable law, and full security for each in the possession and use of the rightful fruits of his own industry—then this new desire for property combines with their larger desire for the direct enjoyments of life, to extend still more the reach of foresight among the people; and make their entry upon the family state, that greatest event in the personal history of their lives, still more the subject of calculation and delay than it might otherwise have been. And the condition of each man, even in humble life, to be on a level with his neighbour, is of powerful influence in spreading emulously and rapidly that higher taste which has been once introduced amongst them: And so, under the civilizing influences alone of wealth and good government, there might come to be a higher collective style throughout the families of a general population—or, in other words, we shall behold them more respectably attired, and lodged in better houses, with a better quality both of food and furniture than in the days of their forefathers. Such influences go a great way to account for the palpable difference in these respects between England and Ireland—between the country where law, and protection, and full liberty of thought, and constantly advan-

* See Dr Smith's account in his Wealth of Nations, of the effect which commerce had on the tastes and habits of the landowners in Europe. It was an effect which reached the whole population.

cing trade and agriculture have flourished for so many generations; and the country where to the bondage of a degrading superstition, there must be added the oppression and misrule of centuries, to frighten both commerce and capital from its shores. And beside the other civilizing influences which tend to elevate a people, and place them on a higher platform of decency and dignity than before, we might have instanced the power of education—had it not been for a distinction to be made between the education of letters and the education of principle—the former of itself being comparatively of slight operation, and so far as it goes tending only somewhat to civilize; while the latter is of mighty and pervading effect over the whole man, whom it tends to Christianize, and so to furnish with new habits—the result of that higher wisdom and principle, which are only to be learned at the schools of an enlightened faith. It is this latter element which predominates, and gives its own characteristic and complexional variety to the state of Scotland—whose people have not been so powerfully operated upon by the same merely civilizing influences of luxury and commerce as those of England; but who have had a larger share of the Christianizing influence than either of the neighbouring nations—so as in some respects to have reached a higher standard than that of England, and in all respects than that of Ireland whose people are behind in both.*

* See Christian and Economic Polity of a Nation, Vol. I. pp. 32—36, being Vol. XIV. of the series, and Printed Evidence in Vol. III. of the same work, or XVI. of the series, pp. 370—372.

6. It is thus that while the observant historian could not fail to notice the difference in their standards of comfort which obtained among the people of different countries—it is thus that the philosophical historian would assign the causes of it. In the great elements of religion, and scholarship, and liberty, and secure property, and civil justice, and commerce with its numerous articles of enjoyment to widen the range of human desires—in these would he find enough to account for all the varieties in the economic state of different nations, from the savage tribes of earth's primeval forests to the best-conditioned peasantry in our civilized world. It is only of late, and for the purpose of sustaining an argument in the controversy of the question, that we have heard of a compulsory and legal provision for the poor, as having a place among the other influences which tend to humanize and elevate a population—as if the widest possible diversity in this respect had not been exhibited, and between countries that were alike strangers to the economy of an artificial pauperism. It is very true that England, perhaps the foremost in the race of civilization, has further signalized herself by the device of a poor-rate. But it were somewhat precipitate to assert because of this, that the poor-rate is therefore the cause of her civilization. It implies no doubt the nation to have been so far in progress as to have had disposable wealth for the maintenance of a great public charity; and a government so far humanized, as, in benevolent consideration for the sufferings of the poor, to have enacted in their behalf a levy and distribu-

tion throughout all its parishes. But this leaves the question wholly untouched, Whether, after all, this was a wise or a wayward legislation?—whether it gave an impulse or laid a drag on the ascending movement of a people, now in rapid transition by other and prior causes, to a state of greater sufficiency than had ever been enjoyed by their forefathers? This question perhaps had best be met, and the subject of it be best illustrated by a distinct and definite example. No one can doubt the progress which Edinburgh has made in wealth during the last two centuries; and that notwithstanding the scenes of wretchedness which have been laid open in those parts of the city where dwell the lowest of the people, whose sunken morality is far more the disgrace of their superiors than their own —the melancholy outcasts as they have been of all christian surveillance for two or three generations. —Yet who can doubt, that on the whole, there has been a great and general elevation in the style of comfort which obtains even among the working classes of our Scottish metropolis? They have shared in the advancing prosperity both of the town and country at large—a prosperity which began at that period when the turbulence of the feudal times had so far subsided, as both to ensure for each man the fruits of his own toil, and to permit a free development of the resources of the nation. Our own town early led the way in this advancing movement; and we might quote, as a part and specimen of its growing sufficiency, the capital realized by old George Heriot, and destined by him for the erection and endowment of that magni-

ficent Hospital which bears his name—in behalf of the decayed citizens of Edinburgh. Now it were in every way as rational, did we ascribe the progressive comfort which obtains among the families of Edinburgh to the institution of this said charity, as if we ascribed the better economical state of the commonalty in England to the institution of its poor-rate—the former of which charities we owe to the will and ordination of a well-meaning man, the latter to the will and ordination of a well-meaning parliament. But it follows not that they owe to either the larger prosperity which they now enjoy, and which has arisen from the operation of distinct and anterior causes altogether. Each of these benevolent institutions may have been the effect or luxuriant off-shot of this prosperity (though in no way the cause of it); and yet may it have been a rank and pernicious luxuriance notwithstanding. For it is a truly possible thing, that as there may be injudicious bequests, so may there be injudicious laws; or, in other words, that the legacy of George Heriot may on the one hand have done little good to Edinburgh, and on the other the legacy of Elizabeth may have done great evil to England. The same crudities which operate within the heart and come forth in the deeds of an individual, may also obtain a lodgement in the minds of senators, and find vent in the acts which proceed from a hall of legislation.

7. And it is thus that our political speculators, confounding causes with consequents and essentials with mere accessories, have been misled in their reasonings on Ireland—when they inferred

from the absence of a poor-rate there, in conjunction with the extreme misery of its people, that it would prove a remedy for all their wretchedness; and, on the other hand, from the presence of a poor-rate in England, that to it the prosperity of the nation, and more especially the superior comfort of the working classes was owing—though, in fact, no more owing to its poor-rate than to its national debt. The way to disentangle a question which relates to the state and habits of a population, when complicated with a foreign influence which has nothing to do with it, is to take a view of diverse populations alike to each other, either in being both under that influence or both free from it—as one part of England with another, all under the operation of a poor-rate; or one part of Ireland with another, when altogether free from it. It is well known that the peasantry of England, in its northern counties, were not only of a more elevated cast but in a state of greater sufficiency than those in the south—both under poor-rate, but with this only difference, that the allowances were most sparing in the former; and, in the latter, the most lavish and indiscriminate. But, what is still more decisive, in comparing one part of Ireland with another, the province of Ulster with the more exclusively catholic provinces, nothing can be more palpable than the superior condition of the common people in the north—a superiority which can by no possibility be ascribed to a legal provision for the destitute, unknown till of late over the whole country, but which is due to the operation of moral causes alone. Would that

our statesmen had been wise enough, to read the true lesson from an exhibition so distinctly set forth to them. Never was there a grosser delusion, than that the body of a people can be raised from degradation and want by this wretched expedient of a poor-rate. On this question the experience of Ireland will prove an echo to the oracular deliverance of the wisest of Irishmen,* who, in reasoning on the distempers of his unhappy land, called on its rulers, to give his countrymen religion, to give them education, to give them moral and industrious habits, to give them the fostering influences of liberty and protection upon mind and character and principle—for that everything else, (but the semblance of a boon without its reality,) was downright fraud.

8. And the same lesson may be drawn, not from the comparison of two, but from the history of one country, or the comparison of that country with itself. We speak of Scotland at the end of the seventeenth century, and of the same Scotland after an interval of nineteen years at the beginning of the 18th century—the former as described by Fletcher of Salton, in 1698, the latter by De Foe in 1717.† There cannot be imagined a wider contrast, or a greater and more rapid improvement, in the moral and economic state of any people—and all due to the energies of that moral administration, which, commencing with the Revolution

* Edmund Burke.

† See the extracts from these two writers in Vol. III. pp. 289, 290, of the Christian and Economic Polity of a Nation, being Vol. XVI. of the series.

when our present parochial system was restored to us after the persecutions and religious wars of one generation, seems to have taken full effect before the lapse of another generation. And they were our zealous and hard-working clergy, with the instrumentality of a well-disciplined church and well-ordered schools, who worked out this great amelioration. In the period to which we now refer a compulsory provision for the poor was unknown, save at most in two or three parishes. Everywhere else the parochial charity was altogether gratuitous—a mighty lesson we do think to the speculators of our day, if they would but learn at the school of experience and history; and a most decisive intimation to our rulers, whether it is the importation of an English poor-rate, or the extension of our ecclesiastical and educational economy, that promises best for the well-being of the common people of Scotland.*

Sect. IX.—*Political Economy of the Question.*

1. It is only since Malthus gave his views to the world, that the subject of pauperism has come under the full cognizance of political economy, or taken a formal place as one of the themes or arguments of this science. Yet Dr Smith—the great author of the still prevalent theory of wealth, even as the other is author of the theory of population—

* For the few remarks we can afford to make on the Foreign Poor-laws, see a future section.

does advert in some of his reasonings to the general state and standard of enjoyment among the common people, as affected by the riches of a country, whether as progressive or declining or stationary. It is obvious at the same time, that, had he been as conversant with the more recent of these two doctrines—with the doctrine of population, as with his own doctrine of wealth—it would have greatly modified the conclusions to which he came on the condition of the lower classes at large. But this, at all events, is a distinct topic from that of pauperism, which repects not the lower but the lowest class in society, or the state and number of those who depend for their subsistence in whole or in part on a legal and compulsory provision, raised for the express object of relieving the destitute. It is to this more special department that we refer, when we say of pauperism, that it has only of late become the article of an economical creed, or had a regular place assigned to it among the dogmata and demonstrations of economical science.

2. And we are not sure that the preferment of our theme to the higher region of philosophy has been at all favourable to the progress of sounder views on the question of pauperism, or to its sounder practical treatment than before. This has laid upon it the servitude, as it were, of a disputed and to many a doubtful theory—in virtue of which many adverse prejudices have been excited; and the whole subject has been distorted, simply from being looked to through the mists of controversy. It is thus that the veriest truisms of plain and everyday experience are made to appear as

the precarious conclusions of a precarious, if not a wholly untenable hypothesis; and which yet detached from that hypothesis or anterior to the promulgation of it, were as implicitly received as are any the most incontrovertible maxims of common prudence or common housewifery. That marriage should be delayed till there is the fair prospect of a sufficiency both for its present and subsequent expenses, and that it is all the more respectable to have a high notion of this sufficiency rather than a low one—these are propositions, which, apart from science or speculation altogether, will be recognised in the immediate light of their own evidence, and not only recognised but acted on by every well-trained and well-educated population, whether by the members of a household or the families of a parish. There is no need of any larger surveys to warrant or to guide the only proceedings by which the right and desirable result can alone be realized. The patent way is to train and educate the people; and the economical blessings which follow this process will be equally sure, whether we take account or not of a whole country or a whole world's population.

3. But whatever opinion may be held on the philosophy of Malthus, (in our view as irrefragable as the most rigid demonstration,) and whether the law of pauperism tend to an undue increase of the population or not—there are certain other of its tendencies from which it may be shown, on the surest and clearest principles of Political Economy, that the strictly unavoidable consequences of the law, wearing though it does an aspect of benignity

to the poor, must be to lower the remuneration of labour; and so to depress the general condition of the lower orders, while it raises a permanent and invincible barrier in the way of their reascent from the degradation into which it has brought them.

4. Nothing can be more natural, and we may add more patent to observation, wherever there exists a large public and certain provision for the poor, than that the care thus taken of each man by the legislature should lessen his own care of himself. Generally or at least frequently speaking, he will be greatly less careful to provide against future contingencies—when thus made to believe, that, under whatever contingencies, he will not be permitted to starve. We do not say that a poor-rate will extinguish the habit of accumulation, for innumerable instances can be alleged of the contrary. But it is enough for our argument, that it powerfully tends to weaken and reduce the habit; and accordingly there are thousands and thousands more of the working classes in England, who have a perfect scorn for Savings' Banks—and that on the express ground of their being institutions set up by the rich, not for the benefit of the lower orders, but to save their own pockets. We have elsewhere explained,* and must here satisfy ourselves with a very brief restatement of the efficacy which lies in these insti-

* See my chapter on Savings' Banks in Vol. II. of the Christian and Economic Polity of a Nation, or Vol. XV. of the series; and my article in the Edinburgh Review, of May 1820, entituled "State and Prospects of Manufactures," republished in Vol. II. of my Political Economy, at p. 371, &c., being Vol. XX. of the series.

tutions to elevate the status of labourers—so that if by their means, a habit of economy were to become general amongst the common people, it would not only secure them against the extreme distress incident to those seasons of periodical depression which so often occur in the commercial world; but would place the average and permanent wages of labour on a higher level than before.

5. It is on the occasion of what are called gluts, or when the market happens to be overstocked with a particular commodity, that a fall takes place in the wages of the men who are engaged in its preparation; and which wages may continue wretchedly low for months together, even beneath the starving point till the glut be cleared away. Now if there have been no previous economy among these workmen, if they have nothing to live upon but the immediate produce of their current day's labour—the temptation is to overstrain and exceed to the uttermost, so as to make up by the quantity of work for the miserably deficient wages now bestowed upon it. And, accordingly it has been known among the hand-loom weavers, that, in such times of calamity, to eke out a scanty pittance for themselves and their famishing children, the loom was kept constantly agoing by the man and wife taking their turns and sharing it between them during all the four and twenty hours—a direct method by which both to increase and lengthen out the glut; or, in other words, not only to deepen but indefinitely to protract the heavy distress to which the adverse state of markets had brought them. Now when once the

opposite habit, the habit of providentially laying up in store as God has prospered them, shall have become general among labourers, this process would be most beautifully reversed. Men having other resources would not work on such miserable wages; or, at all events, would not overwork, but rather take it easily—and, if they worked at all, would work a great deal less than usual. Many in possession of a small accumulated capital, would betake themselves for the time to other employments—nay some of them might afford to rise up to play; and turn what wont to be a season of utter helplessness and despair, into a season of holiday enjoyment. And they would make of it a brief while brilliant interval—for this slackening of work would not only alleviate the glut, but shorten the duration of it. It is thus that by dint of accumulation in good times, the inconveniences of the transition period in bad times could easily be weathered and got over in as many weeks, as now takes months—ere the market could be sufficiently lightened of its supplies, and the price both of the commodity and of the labour which gives it birth were again restored to their customary level.

6. But more than this. Were such the general habit of labourers, the customary rate of wages would undergo a gradual elevation; and not only in times of emergency, but at all times, should we behold the common people in a far higher state of sufficiency than they have ever yet attained. The truth is, that, with each or the greater number in

the possession of a small capital, they would have a far more effective control over the labour market, than men in a condition of helpless dependence, or from hand to mouth for their daily subsistence, could possibly realize. The collective will of men having something might command a doubly greater remuneration for their labour, than the collective will of men having nothing. They are not so entirely at the dictation of their employers—because, able to hold for a time the propositions of the other party at abeyance, they are in a measure the arbiters of their own state; and, virtually, the question of their wages lies all the more at their own determination. Some look with jealousy to this result—while to me it affords a perspective of brightest and most cheering anticipation. I long to see the day when the wages of labour shall bear a far greater proportion than they do now either to the rent of land or to the profits of capital. On every question between masters and servants, as for example that of the combination laws, I must confess that all my partialities and wishes are on the side of the latter—for even though in the competition of rival interests, the scale were to turn more than hitherto on the side of labourers, and so the upper classes perhaps be shorn somewhat of their splendour—this were better than a hundred-fold compensated by the result of a better and happier population, regaling both the heart and the eye of every real philanthropist by the spectacle of their well-subsisted well-clad and in every way well-conditioned

families.* This will at length be effected, not by the strong hand of legislation—not by any violence done to the laws of Political Economy, which are as much beyond the reach of human power as the laws of Nature—but rather by the silent yet resistless operation of these laws, when, as certainly while as quietly as if by hydrostatic pressure, wages are borne up to a higher level, simply because in the negotiations of the market, labourers, on the strength of their own accumulated savings can treat more independently than heretofore with the hirers of labour.

7. The same principle which leads us so to advocate and befriend Savings' Banks, leads us also to deprecate a poor-rate. The one is the antagonist of the other. The self-denial which foregoes or gives up a present enjoyment, must, to become general, be palpably for the sake of one's own future benefit—and not, as under the economy of a compulsory pauperism, for the relief or benefit of rate-payers, who are viewed by the common people of England in the light of natural enemies. It is thus that the system of legal charity has proved an incubus on the rising energies of those who live by labour—because it has lured them from a dependence on themselves; and from the free use of those inherent capabilities, by dint of which and on the strength alone of their own economy and virtuous habits, the whole platform of humble life could be lifted above the mire and

* See my chapters on Combinations, in Vol. II. of the Christian and Economic Polity of a Nation, being Vol. XV. of the series.

sordidness of its present degradation. It is the direct operation of a poor-rate to keep them in the mire. The labourer who spends all he earns is at the perpetual mercy of his employers, who can bring him to the very margin of pauperism—next to which, and on the slightest further depression, he is forced to enter its territory, where all his allowances are fixed and regulated by the guardians and administrators of a poor's-house. It is woeful to think of a noble peasantry, who, under another management, could have won for themselves a secure and impregnable position, whence they might at all times have commanded a decent sufficiency as the remuneration of their toils—that so many of them, ranged as it were along the limit which divides the pauper from the independent labourer, should alternate on either side of it; and thus at one time have a maintenance rigidly awarded to them by parish overseers, and at another a maintenance some hair-breadths larger in the shape of wages, when some favourable change, however slight, in the tremulous labour market, again releases them from imprisonment. It is thus that the condition of the lowest orders is virtually at the arbitration of parish-officers and vestry-men on the one hand who will allow as little, and of capitalists or farmers on the other who will pay as little more than these as they possibly can. This is the unfailing effect of a legal charity for the relief of indigence; and, in as far as the people themselves have been beguiled into a desire or a demand for such an economy, they have become parties to their own degradation.

It is all the more provoking of this system, that, like Satan transformed into an angel of light, it wears an aspect of benignity to the poor—while it diverts them from the alone pathway to comfort and independence, by holding forth a seeming guarantee against destitution which it never can make good, even a promise of sufficiency to all which it can never realize.

8. One specimen of its operation might make this palpable. Conceive a decline in some branch of employment which had given occupation to a certain number of workmen in a parish, and just such a wage as kept them out of the work-house. In the absence of all providential habits, they will have no resources of their own to fall back upon; and thus there seems no other alternative than that so many of them shall be received as in-door paupers, to remain such till the return of better times when the price of labour again rises, and comes back to that minimum point at which it is judged that men and their families might live. It is then that discharged from confinement, they re-enter the open field of competition with their fellow-workmen; when certain it is that their presence there must operate either in keeping down wages at the minimum, or at least retarding if not altogether preventing their further elevation. Certain it is that the wages must settle at a lower point in the scale, in virtue of the presence of these discharged workmen—who, kept as a *corps de reserve*, fulfil the part of a dead weight on the labour market, to the great convenience we have no doubt, at times, of master tradesmen and mas-

ter manufacturers. Had they been otherwise disposed of—instead, for example, of being detained by an unfortunate Poor-law at home—had they availed themselves of public facilities held out for emigration, the adverse consequences of their return to the overstocked department of their former industry would not have followed. But so it is that a Poor-law, which many eulogize as the grand specific for all the economical distempers of our land, has just the effect of plunging the working classes into an abyss, from which, so long as its deadly operation is permitted to continue, it is impossible to raise them.*

9. The difference that we have now stated, in point of effect, between the emigration of our able-bodied labourers and a legal provision for them however temporary at home, should at once decide our preference for the former. There are reasons, which at present we refrain from expounding, for distrusting even the efficacy of emigration, as being of itself or if not accompanied with certain other measures, a remedy of unfailing operation for the miseries of an over-peopled land. But it is worthy of remark, how readily and how confidently our common-place speculators on this question, will advance and advocate their expedients of all sorts for the alleviation of the economic pressure, if it have but the semblance of a tendency that way—without once considering—whether, if adopted in the lump, they would not conflict with and

* See a striking instance of this operation in Vol. II. pp. 323, 324, of the Christian and Economic Polity of a Nation, being Vol. XV. of the series.

neutralize each other. They are not arrested for a moment by this consideration; and will call out strenuously for Savings' Banks, and as strenuously for a Poor-law, and again as strenuously for emigration, and for the contemporaneous operation of these and all other devices which can be thought of, the more the better—as if their number would add to their momentum, till at length the result was made sure of all destitution being met and provided for. It does not occur that a poor-rate hinders the beneficial operation of a Savings' Bank —because many will not accumulate a provision there, for what they conceive has been already provided by the laws of their country; and also that thousands, under the same system, will refuse to emigrate—because unwilling to exchange for the hazards of such an enterprise, the patrimonial right to a subsistence which law has secured for them at home.

10. There is one prognostication we have often made,* and do it still with unabated confidence—which is, that when once the right expedient is fallen upon for lightening a population of its redundancy, it must tell with a certainty and a speed far greater than men ever think of anticipating, on the rise of wages, and so on the general elevation of the working classes. We have elsewhere explained the principle on which a very small excess in the number of labourers must operate a very great reduction in the price of labour; and hence the equal power of a very small diminution in their

* See Vol. II. p. 254, &c., of the Christian and Economic Polity of a Nation, being Vol. XV. of the series.

number in restoring wages to their wonted level, or even raising them indefinitely above it. Emigration, if on a scale of sufficient magnitude, would, for once at least, or at rare and long intervals, have this effect temporarily. And the moral preventive check of Malthus, which nothing can put into general operation but the adoption of right methods for the establishment of a higher taste and character among the people, would have the same effect permanently. In other words, it is mainly—for every thing else is of a subordinate and subsidiary operation—it is mainly to moral causes that we must look for the only effectual solution of this great problem; and the people themselves, when once placed under a wholesome moral regimen, will be found to have the remedy in their own hands. The deacon who patronized a local Savings' Bank, and provided for the education of all the young at well-conducted schools, and stimulated the attendance of his families on church, and did all that could be effected by the conversation and personal intercourse of his ever recurring visits to humanize and dignify the people committed to his charge—he could do much to speed forward the desired result in his own district: And this is just tantamount to saying, that a right parochial system could generalize the same result, and realize its benefits and its blessings for the country at large.

Section X.—*Politics of the Question.*

1. For our least and lowest specimen of the influence of politics on this question, we might refer to those Commissioners of Inquiry, whose obvious aim it is to make out a case. We are far from affirming this to be universal, though we fear it is too frequent—more especially when the inquiry, if made to terminate in one way, is to issue in the establishment of a Board, with an apparatus of constituent and dependent and withal well-paid offices. When under the influence of such an anticipation, the whole business, more especially if in the hands of a sordid government and of the alike sordid hirelings whom they employ, is very apt to degenerate into what is familiarly termed a job—and that because of the much-longed-for and much-laboured-after result, which is to swell the patronage of the one party, and to provide salaries for the other. It is grievous to think of such wretched influences as these, presiding over the determination of a great moral as well as economical question; and pauperism is pre-eminently of this description—affecting not the comfort alone, but the character and habits of a whole population. This is a great evil; and it is one to which our question of all others stands peculiarly exposed, from the semblances and plausibilities which it furnishes to one, who without much skill or discernment, might avail himself of the facilities which they give to him, for making an appeal to popular sym-

pathy, and so hurrying onward, as if by impulse, the public mind to a precipitate and wrong conclusion. It is by a woeful perversion of all that is just and sound in the philosophy of human affairs—that a question like this should have been submitted to the arbitration of mere statists and surveyors. All they can do, in that capacity, is to ascertain the facts of a case—of a population, it may be in a state of what they would call extreme destitution; and if not of extreme misery, it is because the only standard of comfort whereof they have any experimental knowledge, is so immeasurably beneath that of the more civilized countries around them. But thus to ascertain the facts of a case is truly a distinct matter, from that of providing for the case. But this seems well-nigh forgotten in the work of legislation as practised now-a-days. If, in former times, the tendency was to proceed on principles without facts—as if to keep at the greatest possible distance from this error, the incessant demand now is for facts without principles. And so our empirical statesmen would commit questions of the most momentous import, into the hands of mere collectors and empirics like themselves.

2. The evil is much aggravated, when the temptation thus to pervert and mismanage out of doors is followed up by another temptation, which we fear is powerfully felt, and has a most misleading influence within the walls of Parliament. The greatest danger of this is when the two great parties in the state are almost equally poised; and with a readiness in each to lay hold of any element which

might give it an advantage over the other, there ensues between them a rivalship for popularity—a bidding for the good opinion of the multitude, which, in these days when the constitution has been so greatly popularized, is of so much more importance than ever for the attainment of power. And the question of pauperism is precisely the one which stands most in danger of being thus tampered with; and accordingly there is perhaps none which has been so frequently made a stalking-horse for the objects of political men. This is truly a sore evil; and we fear has told most mischievously on the question first of general education for England, and then of religious instruction in Scotland—when the ruling party found it necessary, in order to conciliate the dissenters, to keep both of these vital questions at abeyance. This too, we believe, is the secret reason why Ireland has been precipitated into a Poor-law, as well as England been arrested on her way to the eradication of her own pernicious system of charity. It is because men of both parties make on this particular question a sacrifice of their own convictions; and will rather join in the perpetration of a grievous injury to the common people, than incur the odium of a seeming hostility against them. It is thus that the questions of most urgent importance to the good of society are disposed of—decided, not on their own merits, but so as to subserve for the time being, the ever shifting objects of a wretched partizanship.

3. Yet in justification of measures, though palpably hastened forward by the corrupt influences

which we have now specified, we sometimes hear a principle alleged—we mean, a principle in the science of government; and perhaps the one most frequently quoted is centralization, which aims at the establishment of a uniform regime for the whole empire, and has all the greater charms to an administration which seeks to strengthen and perpetuate its own power, that it so often makes room for the multiplication of offices, and for the consequent increase of patronage in its own hands. This is what we have most to dread in the projected changes which are said to be now in contemplation on the pauperism of Scotland, and that for the purpose of harmonizing it with the system of pauperism in England—to prepare the way for which, it is rumoured that Commissioners from that country will be appointed, to inquire and sit in judgment, both on our methods of parochial charity and on the state of our population. Should this design be ever carried into effect, we may lay our account with the most ludicrous mistakes on the part of these official visitors from England. They will come in among a people who have a different standard or rather a different style of enjoyment from their own,* each deviation from which will in their eyes appear to be a deficiency, and so an argument for a levy on the parish to make it up. Our bare-feeted children and earth-en-floored tenements will be to them the indications of an extreme wretchedness; and so also perhaps may be the houses of our peasantry—not, it

* See Vol. III. of the Christian and Economic Polity of a Nation, being Vol. XVI. of the series.

is certain, so tastefully fitted up, or kept in the comfort and cleanliness which so regale the eye in the picturesque cottages and rural hamlets of England. We are gradually it is certain, and in the natural progress of civilization, making upon our southern neighbours; and the progress is to the full as striking, if not more so, in the unassessed as in the assessed parishes of Scotland. We hope therefore that the project of repeating in this country the experiment which has just been set up in Ireland will be forthwith abandoned; and that the preposterous attempt will not be made here to raise the general economic condition of a people, or put them into a state of greater sufficiency by means of a poor-rate. There is certainly some danger of such being the result—if the question of our national pauperism, is first to be looked at by English eyes, and then submitted to the arbitration of Englishmen. This is the very conclusion which they of all others will be most apt to land in—more especially when comparing what they will interpret into glaring evidences of wretchedness among the people, with what they will be astonished at as the glaring deficiency of our parish allowances. The palpable way, it may be thought, of making these two ends meet, were just to provide for the one by enlarging the other—a method however, it is most certain, which will not alleviate the sufferings of our poor; but will only annihilate the last remnants of that noble and virtuous habit, which was in full and fresh because then undisturbed operation, among the Scottish peasantry in the days of our grandfathers. We can

figure its effect on these our inspectors from the south, when they find so many of our paupers who have no visible means of subsistence—such as they can state numerically, or registrate in one of their official schedules—when they find on their examination of our sessional records, that the sums currently given to these may be such as eighteenpence a-week, or half-a-crown in the month, or even but twenty shillings in the year to eke out a house-rent, nay perhaps so little in a whole twelvemonth as the money that will purchase a pair of shoes. It is forgotten that the parochial charity of Scotland does not profess—save in those rare instances where there is an absolute necessity—to provide an entire maintenance for its paupers. All which it undertakes or professes is to give in aid. The methods of its administration are founded on the principle—First, that if any pensioner have a remainder of strength for working, that strength should be put forth; for it is his duty to be as little burdensome as possible—Second, that if he have relatives who have the means of contributing to his relief, it is their duty to help him—Third, that if surrounded by neighbours, their sympathy and succour will not be wanting, and that to supersede these is not for the virtue or substantial well-being of any parish—Fourth, that if any affluent and kind-hearted gentleman or lady be within reach, it is proper that a representation of the case should be made to them, either by the clergyman or any of his elders; and that it is greatly better when the exigence is met by a secret donative from an individual than by an allowance from a Kirk Session.

There is great confidence felt amongst us in the efficacy of these preventive expedients; and we utterly deprecate the system which would put an end to them. And we may well add, that, save in transition periods or times of extraordinary distress, it is a confidence that never fails us. We stand in dread of any assimilation to the Poor-law of England, because sure that it would undermine the operation of all those principles on which hitherto we have placed our reliance—the foresight and industry of our labourers, the mutual obligations of kindred, the duties and affinities of social life, the spontaneous benevolence of our upper classes. There may be too much of the ethereal and too little of the tangible in all this for the common run of our Parliamentary Commissioners. Nevertheless we do entreat them to spare us; and would humbly suggest it were better, if they first ascertained of their own system that it gave satisfaction to their people at home, ere they offered to palm it upon us. It were time for them to look abroad, after they had settled all controversy on the subject among themselves. The rumour of their movement northward has spread great alarm amongst us; and there is a rising spirit in our land to ward off from it the invasion of English ideas and English practices. With every disposition therefore to be courteous, we would earnestly implore them to keep within their own borders; and reserve any experiments which they are anxious to make, whether in legislation or economics for the people of their own territory.

4. But under this head there still remains some-

thing further to be said—for it would now appear, that it is not from English politics alone, that danger is to be apprehended; but that the cause of a right settlement for the poor lies open to the utmost jeopardy from the state of our politics at home. It is not many weeks since there came forth upon this subject a very sound and able Report by a Committee of Landed Proprietors from various parts of Scotland, followed up however by a series of most unfortunate Remarks by one of their own number, and printed with the knowledge and under the sanction of the Committee. We can imagine nothing more singularly untoward, than that, at a time when a cordial and common understanding between the church and heritors of Scotland is so indispensable to the right settlement of this question, such a mediator as the author of these remarks should have risen up between them; and so managed as in the course of his observations, to have positively said nothing that is not directly fitted to stir up acerbity of feeling between the two parties, and put them into a state of hopeless misunderstanding and alienation from each other. Certain it is that both the clergy and the landowners take the strongest possible interest in the projected changes on the pauperism of Scotland; but that of the former is chiefly a moral interest felt by them as guardians of the national virtue, and apprehensive of a system that carries in it a deteriorating influence on the principles and habits of the common people. And without detracting in the least from the philanthropy of the latter, or casting the slightest discredit on the patriotic

regard which they bear both to the comfort and character of the lower orders, they, over and above this, have of all classes the strongest monied interest in the determination of this question—seeing that mainly upon them, or upon the rental of their estates, the great burden of the proposed expenditure would fall. Now if that view of pauperism be admitted which is advocated in these pages, and which we are glad to observe is the prevalent view and opinion of churchmen in Scotland—then is there a most happy coincidence between that moral interest which the clergy should have most at heart; and that monied interest, which, not denying their full sympathy with the latter and higher object, the heritors must have much at heart also. What Burke said of education, and it holds pre-eminently true of the education of principle, that it is the cheap defence of nations, applies with peculiar force and emphasis to the question of pauperism—the best and far the cheapest provision for which is the Christian instruction of the people. Behold then the solid foundation, because a foundation of truth and principle, of the strongest natural alliance between the church and the heritors of Scotland—or rather, because the very opposite of a joint conspiracy against the good of the lower orders, the foundation of a firm triple alliance between the church, the heritors, and the people—who, if each party but understood their own interests, might enter with most friendly cooperation on the prosecution of this great cause. We cannot imagine therefore a more untoward event, a more grievous malconvenance, than that

when on the eve of stepping upon this common ground, so rich in the promises of a most fruitful and enduring fellowship, this representative of the landed interest and professed expounder of their views and feelings, should, at the very commencement of negotiations so hopeful, have come forth to cast a firebrand in the midst of us—and such a firebrand too, as that in the very attempt to extinguish it, there is danger of still farther collision, and that between parties whose imperative policy as well as duty it is, to act in peace and cordiality together.*

5. Nevertheless the truth, for once at least, (we have no desire to harp on it) must be told. He accuses us first of contempt and contumely to the Government, for having received with coldness a proposition of theirs, which cast us on the landowners of Scotland for the endowment of our New Churches; and then of distrust in these landowners, to whose liberality and willingness we should have confided all that was required for supplying the lack of Christian education among the people. Our brief reply to this is, that from the time when the property of the church was first seized on by the landlords, down to the present hour, we have with a few splendid exceptions, experienced nothing but the most tenacious resistance at their hands, to every claim preferred by us on that fund which was once ours but is now theirs, for the extension of the means of religious instruction, whether by

* This was strongly felt by me in drawing up the last Report on Church Extension to the General Assembly, it being the Seventh Report, and to which I beg to refer the reader.

the erection of new churches or in the shape of a necessary provision for additional clergymen. This is our vindication—nor do we mean to repeat it—both of the disappointment we felt in the proposal of Government, and of our diffidence in the necessary consent to it of the Heritors of Scotland.

6. We are glad to make our escape from this painful reckoning—feeling as we do, not the desirableness only but the duty—and that for the chance of securing a great moral boon to the poorer families of our land—of making every sacrifice that is consistent with truth and honour, in this question between the church and the heritors of Scotland. And for this purpose we are willing to abjure all the historical recollections of former years—to discharge from our memory—First, the Act of 1706, by which the consent of three-fourths of the heritors was required, ere the disjunction of too large or populous parishes could be effected—Second, the almost impracticable barrier which this has raised in the way of church extension—Third, the frequent annexation of parishes, when the increasing population of the country imperiously required a movement in the opposite direction—Fourth, the general opposition and alarm even of a few years back on the part of the landed proprietors, as indicated by the resolutions of county meetings in all parts of Scotland, when a bill which threatened to facilitate the erection of new churches passed through Parliament—where it would infallibly have been stopped had not the patrimonial interests of the tithe-holders been protected by clauses of greater stringency than ever—And lastly, the exceeding rarity (we

remember only one example) of any allocation to our extension churches of the unexhausted teinds—notwithstanding the moral certainty that there is not a congregation in our scheme by whom it would not have been most thankfully received; and not a presbytery in Scotland, where the boon would not have been acknowledged with the utmost cordiality and respect—These facts—now that we are reproached by this advocate for Scotland's landowners in not having trusted to their liberality—we shall willingly cast into the deep sea of oblivion; or, if we cannot altogether extinguish the recollection of them, we shall at least acknowledge the error into which we have fallen, in grounding what we are now told was a mistaken conclusion on all our bygone experience: and, now that the means have been thus placed within our sight, and we hope within our reach, of an ample provision in behalf of our overgrown parishes for a century to come—we shall make all the reparation we can to the landed proprietors for the injustice we have done them, by our instant and most grateful acceptance of the proffer; and the as instant dismissal from our thoughts of the acerbities and the wrongs of former generations.

Section XI.—*Statistics of the Question.*

1. We confess that the prevalent notion of statistics differs essentially from the view that we have ever entertained of it. To express our idea gene-

rally, we should say that to learn the statistics of any given subject is to acquire that knowledge of it in its several parts, which, as may be shown by specific instances, is quite a distinct thing from the knowledge that we may have of it on the whole. Take for an illustrative example the statistics of British agriculture. We might know generally of the millions of quarters of various sorts of grain produced annually in the whole island; or we might know statistically of the thousands of quarters produced in each separate county; and it were a still more thorough statistics, did we know of the hundreds or tens of quarters produced in each parish. And so might there be a general description of the mineralogy of the British isles, or a statistical description of the mineralogy of each small district. In like manner we might have a British Flora; and from the study of such a work, we might pass on to the statistics of Botany, by entering on the study of its provincial or even its parochial Floras. And so the magnificent sketches of Humboldt could be broken down into an atlas of successive landscapes, which would present us with what may be called the statistics of scenery. Statistics in short stands in the same relation to general science that topography does to geography. As our last illustration, we might perhaps distinguish between a general view of the moon as seen by the naked eye, and that more particular view of its several telescopic fields of vision, which, if each laid before us in a descriptive paragraph of its own, would furnish the statistics of the moon's surface. The

word is comparatively recent; and we always understood it as the sub-diminutive of state—so that while we spoke of the state of a country, when described as a whole, we speak of its statistics, when described by its shires or towns or parishes. We are not sure that the term was at all in use amongst us, before Sir John Sinclair undertook the Statistical Account of Scotland. It is obvious that if our view or definition of statistics were adopted and proceeded on, the assiduous cultivation of it would mightily contribute, not to the facts only, but to the philosophy of all the sciences —securing a far more deep and thorough insight into any given matter of contemplation; and bringing up to view more both of the inner structure and hidden principle of things. It would advantage human knowledge by all the difference between a superficial and a profound acquaintance with Nature in its various departments; and be the parent of great discoveries—just as the treatment of a small bit of chalk opened up a new store-house of wonders in chemistry, and unravelled secrets to which no general survey of all the cliffs and strata on the face of the earth could have ever led the way.

2. Such might be the high achievement of statistics as thus understood—but not as tied down by the definitions and rules of a society in whose hands the whole subject has been so fettered and restricted, that, viewed as an instrument of inquiry, little or nothing has yet been done by it. For, first, they propose "to confine their attention rigorously to facts—and, as far as it may be

found possible, to facts which can be stated numerically and arranged in tables." Now by this exclusion of all which cannot be stated numerically, we venture to affirm that an interdict is laid on our attention to those very facts which are of the greatest scientific importance, and therefore possess the highest claims to the recognition of inquirers. If this demand for numbers must on all occasions be deferred to, if ere facts can be admitted to a place in the estimation or regard of this new race of philosophers, it be their paramount condition that they must be stated arithmetically—then we see not how any acceptance can be found for many of the greatest and most pregnant facts in all philosophy; and which, but for this arbitrary dictation of a recent school, would have possessed a high rank in the statistics of one or other of the sciences. And then, under the cover of this conventional aphorism of theirs, how many are the solemn insignificancies which might be palmed on the notice of the public. In botany, for example, it might be of importance to know, that certain species had been found in higher latitudes, than where they had ever been even thought capable of living or propagating before; but of no earthly importance to know that there were seven rather than six specimens of one sort, twelve of another, and seventeen of a third. It is this latter information, however—the how many—the category of number—which, in the eyes of our modern statists, stamps all its value on the facts now specified—as if truths were of no worth, unless they were such as could be scheduled, and placed in an

imposing array of figures, before the disciples of this new science, which has fashions of its own. At this rate we can no more wonder at the immense store of downright puerilities, which have been suffered to accumulate on their hands—as meaningless and effete as any of those into which my excellent friend Mr Cleland ever permitted himself to run, when giving way occasionally to an indiscriminate passion for statistics of any kind, if they only admitted of being put into a tabular form. His statement, for example, of the weights and prices of all the church-bells in the city of Glasgow, will satisfy all the conditions on which these associated savans have of late shown themselves to be so determined and peremptory—for it can both be expressed in arithmetical ciphers, and set forth in parallel columns, to the great delight and edification of these devoted amateurs. Verily there is some room for the classification, on which a newspaper editor proceeded lately, when, for a title or heading to one of his paragraphs, he prefixed the very significant and necessary warning of "Statistics worth knowing."

3. But absolutely to ensure that, in the great mass and majority of what has been piled together in the lumbering and voluminous collections of the last few years, the statistics shall not be worth knowing—behold another rule or maxim of one of their most celebrated societies—even that "The Statistical Society (of London) will consider it the first and most essential rule of its conduct, to exclude carefully all opinions from its transactions and publications." If it be meant by this, that

no preconceived opinions shall be suffered to interfere with the most scrupulously faithful registration of well observed facts—nothing can be more philosophical or more Baconian than this. But if it be meant that all opinions are to be excluded, not merely as matters of belief, but as matters even of consideration—so as not to be entertained, even as objects of thought—then have the society, and in homage too to what they think the inductive philosophy, cast away from them what in truth is both the directing and the animating principle of all inductive inquiries. It is very true that a much loved hypothesis might operate with a disturbing bias on the work of observation: But that the observer should take up an hypothesis from others, or even frame one for himself, and then place it upon its trial—why this is the very process to which modern science is indebted for almost every footstep of the sure and rapid advancement which she has made in these latter days. There is all the difference in the world between two questions—the first put by a mind unconscious of all opinions whatever on the subject at issue, and then casting itself abroad among the thousand likelihoods of speculation, on the chance or possibility of its lighting upon the one and only truth which can abide the test of all experience; and the second put by a mind which has got hold of a distinct opinion, and then sets itself forward to the distinct object of prosecuting such experiments or observations as might serve either to verify or disprove it. The former, or the indefinite question, may be put thus, What is the truth?—and the

latter, or the definite question thus, Is this the truth? It is in the latter way, or by a tentative process—each term in the series being a distinct and definite attempt to dispose of a given something, and that by a verdict of proven or not proven—it is thus that truth is far more quickly and certainly arrived at: And, should this process be discarded, then the united labours of all the statists in the world will not make out one great or valuable discovery, will not even prepare the way for it.

4. Let the statical essayist, then, be permitted without rebuke to state from the outset, what the opinions are which his proposed induction is fitted to determine—and if in the course of his informations, be they few or many, one of these should brighten towards certainty, let it be competent for him to point out the growing evidence, and even to proclaim the consequent belief—nay, though the doctrine in question should rest but on the authority of one observation, an *instantia crucis*, let not a fact so pregnant be despised by our assembled savans because of its singleness, even albeit a solitary unit, requiring for its accommodation no table to meet the definition of their learned committee, no parallel columns wherewith to regale their eye-sight. We are aware of the fashionable contempt for theory; but a sound theory is one thing, and ought not to be confounded with an untried hypothesis which is another. A theory is a general proposition, which may be true in spite of its generality; and in this case it becomes a general fact—all the more important in

proportion to its generality, because embracing then a larger portion of truth, or comprehending all the larger number of facts and phenomena. Theory, now-a-days, has become the object of an adverse popular cry, hooted at as a stigmatized outcast; and so put forth of the camp, to make room for the empirical and chance-medley collections of the present day. It is thus that our statists, professed worshippers though they be of the inductive philosophy, have utterly mistaken wherein it is that the great strength of this philosophy lies. Their intellectual tactics have accordingly become the worst possible, of paltry achievement, and leading to no permanent or general results—just as bad as if in military tactics one should prefer being at the head of a miscellaneous rabble, rather than of a well-marshalled regiment. Verily it may be said of this town-made philosophy of theirs, that there is an urgent call for the revisal of its principles and rules, or rather for the abolition of its perversities and its errors.

5. We might have gone into a further exposition of these; but we shall hold this task to be superseded by referring, once for all, to an article of extraordinary merit, which appeared in the 31st volume, page 45, or 60th number, for April 1838, of the London and Westminster Review. We have recently learned that its author is John Robertson, Esq., the former editor of that periodical—a native of Aberdeen, and now a resident in London. We earnestly advise the republication of that paper in a separate form—exposing, as it does with great felicity and force, the fundamental errors in the

procedure of that society on which he animadverts. He has fully made good all his four objections to their rule for the exclusion of opinions. 1. That "It prevents the discovery of new truths. 2. It deprives the labours of the society of definite purposes. 3. The facts of which it causes the collection and arrangement are those which are useless and irrelevant as evidence. 4. The observance of this rule is irreconcilable not merely with the progress of science and knowledge, but with the actions and operations of the society itself." Perhaps Mr Robertson would do well to expand somewhat his views and illustrations—though every intelligent reader must recognise in the following pregnant expressions, the whole principle and philosophy of the subject. "Theories, be it ever remembered, are facts viewed by the most powerful minds; what are called facts are details and particulars as conceived by the most ordinary minds." "Opinion is most wanted where truth is the object, it is the parent and precursor of truth." "The exclusion of opinions is the exclusion of the only guides which can conduct their researches to any useful end." "The ay or no of any distinct proposition is the only object of inquiry." "Before you can inquire you must have something that you seek." "The more distinct the end the greater the chances of success; the absence of an end is futility." "The rule of the council, by forbidding the proposal of the affirmative or negative of a distinct proposition as an object of their researches, vitiates the researches themselves in proportion as their object is made vague." "When men go to seek they know

not what, they become puzzled how to set about it, and the most common effect is, that they do nothing." "The uncertainty about the objects they have to seek, caused by the exclusion of opinions, will prevent them from acting to any purpose." "The exclusive principle acts in two ways—it causes the collection of useless details, and prevents the value of those which are useful from being ascertained." "Their whole labour consists in sowing figures and reaping sums." It is possible, that to a reader of second-rate intelligence, the singular beauty of some passages in this composition, and the occasional pleasantries wherewith it is enlivened, may cast a shade over the just and profound logic, by which it is throughout characterized.

6. We close this section with the briefest possible application of its subject to pauperism. Had so many informations of its amount in various countries, such as the few statements given by Mr Alison in his book on Population, of the expenditure in various cities and nations of the Continent—had these been formed into a table, and so extended we shall imagine as to embrace all the states in the world, this, as satisfying the two conditions of the numerical and the columnar, would have been accepted we presume by all the statists as of an eminently kindred and appropriate character, and laid before them in the very form now demanded by their science. Yet, however desirable to be presented with a general view of this sort, we cannot help thinking—that, because of its very gene-

rality, so far from being thereby identified, it rather stands contrasted with the true nature and design of statistical inquiries—being a bare sketch or outline, and as naked of details, as if in geography there was laid before us a map of the world, with but the names and boundaries of its continents and islands and kingdoms. The proper object of statistics surely is to fill up these larger divisions; and so to get at the real statistics of pauperism, we should deal with it, not in states or provinces, but should deal with it in parishes. The former, some may think, is the way of obtaining a comprehensive, when in truth it is but a slender and superficial view of the whole matter. It is only in the latter way of it, that we shall ever obtain the revelation of its essence, of what may be termed the internal structure and physiology of pauperism. It is thus, and thus alone, that we come at the sight of its inner mechanism; or can possibly attain, either to the true philosophy, or right practical treatment of the question. It is only by coming into converse with the men and women and families of a parish, that we are in fit circumstances for studying the human nature of the subject, or its living principles—which are of far more importance, than either its laws or its general history; and as much more promising, both of scientific and practical results—as the treatment of a small bit of chalk in a crucible is a likelier way of eliciting the chemistry of this material, than the construction of a geological map of all the chalk formations in the world. This we hold to be the alone true

and right investigation—the only way by which to probe into the inner depths of the subject, and so get hold of its moving springs of operation.

7. On these grounds we were led into the belief, that our experience of St John's, Glasgow, was eminently statistical, whether with or without tabular views. The only thing indeed we had to offer in that way, was the schedule of our fourth section, where the receipts and expenditure might have been given in vertical columns, and with horizontal lines of numbers. We fondly think that this might have been accepted in full of all such demands—more especially as we furnished the arithmetical criteria of ours being the poorest parish in Glasgow; and told of the five-and-twenty sections into which it was divided, with a deacon for the management of the pauperism in each; and detailed as the experience of the greater number of these in their own words, that with almost no sacrifice of time and a perfect bagatelle of money which might be raised by voluntary contributions anywhere, they met for eighteen years all the demands of parochial charity; that the average expenditure fell short of £40 a-year for each thousand of the population; and yet, most decisive of all, that ours—as proved by the excess of imports over exports was the best served and best satisfied parish in Glasgow—These matters, we reckon, might have told somewhat on the Statistical Section of the British Association; but, whatever impression they may have made on others, they made none whatever on the mind of my excellent friend Dr Alison—who stated more than once in

his replies, that the kind of information which I dealt in, was not such as that Section could receive—and that nothing would serve for their entertainment but statistics, and such facts as could be given statistically. In other words, they would have been better pleased, had I brought lists or inventories of all the chairs and pans and tables, and other articles whether of food or furniture, that I could lay my hands upon in the dwellings of my common people. Enough, one might imagine, the resistless evidence that a people without, were better off than a people with the compulsory provision raised by assessment for the city at large; and how the information called for could in the least supplement or confirm this evidence we are at a loss to comprehend. The statists, we again repeat, must revise their principles and methods—else they will be perpetually incurring the sacrifice of a solid experience to an idle form.

Sect. XII.—*Recent Authorship of the Question.*

1. A full review of any work is out of the question. At the most, we can only give a few brief notices, and on those points which chiefly concern our own argument.

2. The first of these is Mr Alison's book on Population. We must pass over the strangely mistaken inferences of his second chapter grounded on the palpable and well-known truth, that a great proportion of the soil upon the earth is capable of

subsisting a greater number of human beings, than are employed to labour it. But this may be true, and yet the limit on which Malthus and others so legitimately reason may in fact be arrived at. Enough for this that the land last entered on can yield no greater produce than will suffice for the maintenance of its agricultural labourers. Should it have come to this, it signifies nothing to be told of the capabilities of the superior soils, in virtue of which the food of Britain might be raised by only a fraction of those workmen who are sustained by it. It might both be true that the agricultural produce of Britain is raised by less than a fourth or fifth of the people who are subsisted by it; and it yet be true that no more produce could be raised, but by an additional labour which would require for its support more than all the additional food that was raised by it. This is a limit which cannot be forced, but at the expense of landlords; and which if pushed indefinitely forward would strip them of all their property. The other proposal of this author to break up grass-lands; and alter the existing distribution of the ground, or, which is tantamount to this, the existing taste and demand of its proprietors—were the admission of a principle, which, if fully and consistently carried out, would terminate in the abolition altogether of an ownership in the soil. But we must forbear. Indeed to reply any longer to this, would be to repeat our own first chapter on Political Economy, which we should be glad if any reader would take the trouble to peruse, immediately after that he had finished the second chapter

of Mr Alison. This would at least give him the advantage of comparing together two distinct outsets to two distinct processes of thought and reasoning, and landing in certain conclusions wholly different from each other. At all events, we would earnestly request the attention of the inquirer to an article in the Appendix of our Political Economy, entituled, "Home Colonization"—in which we endeavour to trace the effects that would ensue, were the attempt to push agriculture beyond its own spontaneous rate of progress carried into operation.

3. Mr. Alison in the twelfth chapter of his work, insists much on the effect of extreme poverty to induce a general despair and recklessness; and so, by weakening the operation of the preventive check, to increase the frequency of marriages. There is undoubted truth in all this; and the only error which accompanies the observation, perfectly just in itself, is that he brings it forward, not merely in the shape of a novelty, but in the shape of a correction on the theory of Mr Malthus. Now it is what Mr Malthus himself fully admits; and, so far from being of adverse operation against his theory, it forms a constituent part of it. He who could describe so well the considerations which told in restraining marriages among the higher classes of England (Book II. Chap. vii.) was not likely to overlook the influence of excessive destitution in so enfeebling, or rather nullifying the force of these considerations, as to destroy the preventive check altogether among the poorest of the poor. Accordingly he tells us

(Book III. C. xi.) of a wretchedness "that had no tendency to destroy the passion which prompts to increase, but which effectually destroyed the checks to it from reason and foresight." "Poverty, when it has once passed certain limits, almost ceases to operate." "The most constant and best directed efforts will almost invariably be found among a class above the class of the wretchedly poor." "The desire of immediate gratification, and the removal of the restraints to it from prudence, may perhaps in such countries (where extreme wretchedness prevails) prompt universally to early marriages." These general conclusions of Mr Malthus are in perfect keeping with the facts of that very extensive induction on which his doctrine is based. And accordingly we scarcely ever read of the moral and intelligent preventive check, save in modern Christendom, as in Norway, Switzerland, and Britain—though it seems to have operated somewhat among the free citizens of Greece. It is on the failure of this check, that the theory of Malthus—true in all its parts to them who will look at it comprehensively—finds its dread verification, in the other checks and influences, which are of positive and all-powerful operation in keeping down the population of the world to the level of its food. It is an undeniable truth that extreme want stifles and extinguishes the preventive check; but it is a truth propounded by Malthus as well as by Alison—and it is scarcely consistent with literary justice to bring it forward in disparagement, or in seeming refutation of a theory, by which it is not only recognised; but by which express pro-

vision is made, or rather an account is rendered, for all the consequences that follow in its train.

4. But though Mr Alison incurs no error, so long as he abides by Malthus even while in form he is opposing him, when he affirms that extreme poverty and extreme improvidence go hand in hand—on the moment of his departing from this great authority, he falls into a most egregious error in the application he makes of the truth thus alike promulgated by both. He tells us that the way to cure the people of their improvidence, is first to raise them out of their destitution; and this he proposes should be done by a poor-rate. This expedient is just as true to human nature, as if, in order to increase still further the preventive check now so powerful among the younger sons of noble families, it were proposed to give each of them a pension of a thousand pounds a-year—the infallible result of which would be to increase the marriages, not to diminish them. And certain it is, on the very same principle—let the independent labourer who struggles to keep his head above water, not yet too low to have cast all prospective considerations away from him—let him have a vestry pension, though of but a thousand pence a-year; and certain it is that such a measure, if generally carried into effect, would, *pro tanto*, increase the number of marriages in this class also. But if it be said that the provision in question is only designed for a class still lower than these, we are here met by the undoubted principle—that though the man, who struggles to better his condition, may be all the more inclined to economize

that which he has painfully made his own; it follows not that the man, whose condition we attempt to better by a helping hand from without, shall be equally careful of that the acquisition of which costs him no care. Experience is painfully the reverse of this; and besides were it otherwise, were it the tendency of pauperism to encourage sobriety instead of dissipation among its nurselings —then would it bring them indefinitely near to the condition of independent labourers; and it were exceedingly difficult, we think it impracticable, so to manage as that the supplies of parochial charity should cease on the moment that this higher degree of comfort were attained, when the influence which we have now ascribed to a pension, whether from the state in favour of one class, or from the parish in favour of another, would come into play. Between these two categories, it is impossible to avoid the conclusion, that a poor-rate is on the whole an incentive to population; and the prognostications of Mr Malthus evince a deeper insight into our nature than do those of Mr Alison*—as

* Yet Mr Alison when not misled by his partiality for a Poor-law, discerns the whole truth of this matter—as when he tells us that "Property is a great advantage *when it is the fruit of honest industry.*" It admits of a more extensive application than he makes of it, when he so well observes that—"It is not the mere possession of money, *but the habits by which money has been earned*, which constitutes the lasting benefit." Vol. II. p. 73. But more applicable still—"To give them property (workmen) without the course of life by which it has been acquired, is only to give them more extended means of licentiousness. It is not so much the possession of capital, as the habits by which it has been acquired, and the desire which those habits produce for its increase, which is of importance to the lower orders." Vol. II. p. 153. Yet this is the writer who can contend for a poor-rate on the new argument that it raises the general standard of enjoyment.

experimentally verified by the supernumeraries of all those English counties which were most pauperized; and by the consequent reaction which, whether well directed or not, was at least called forth by the pressure of evils actually felt, and fostering every year into greater magnitude and strength within the bosom of their overcrowded parishes.

5. Having these views it is quite to be expected, that he should make the economical take precedency of the moral. Of these two things, the comfort and character of the people, he would begin with the wrong term first. With that aspiring and enlarged philanthropy which does him honour, and which dissociates him altogether from the class of heartless and merely secular utilitarians, his whole aim is the re-establishment of both; but he seeks the restoration of character through the medium of comfort as the preliminary, instead of seeking their comfort through the medium of character as the preliminary. The whole question lies in this, which of these is the stepping-stone? He tells us that "A working-man who puts on a good coat on Sunday, has mounted one step on the ladder of improvement. The next may take him to church." He mistakes the order here. It is not the coat, furnished perhaps by a clothing society, which gives the impulse to church-going. It is the conscience operated on by a moral agency, and so enlisted on the side of church-going, which leads him to find the coat. If asked, how can he find one?—we reply, it is strange that he who calculates, and truly we believe, the

expenditure of the lower classes on whisky alone to be upwards of six thousand pounds a-year for each two thousand of the population—it is strange that Mr Alison who thus calculates should, of all others, put such a question. With the exception of a small centage whom our district visitors would be sure to fall in with, this whole number of two thousand people might be fearlessly thrown upon themselves. The experimental order will be found at one with the scriptural order. "Seek first," in behalf of these people, "the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all other things shall be added unto them." Under the moral influence of a parochial agency, with its church and schools, and a commensurate staff not of teachers only but of elders and deacons—a new face of comfort and sufficiency, a new economical aspect, might be spread over this aggregate of vice and wretchedness in the course of a very few years.

6. We cannot even enumerate the various errors in political economy which may be pointed out in this work—as First, that machinery by superseding the work of human hands should lay an arrest on population—Second, that the potential fertility of the earth should absolve us from all alarm about the undue excess of population—as if it were practically of any more consequence to the starving operatives in this country, that they should be told either of the far future capabilities of agriculture, or the far distant lands in parts of the world to them inaccessible, than that they should be told of the harvests that wave on the face of Jupiter—

Thirdly, that the argument for a compulsory provision in behalf of indigence is at one with the argument for a system of religious instruction at the expense of the nation—when the total dissimilarity between them both in principle and effect can be fully made out on the clearest principles—Fourth, the glaring traversal he makes of his own principle in reasoning for the Corn-laws, when he does not fail to tell us (Vol. II. p. 488.) how soon the increase of population would follow up the importation of food, and so land us in as straitened a condition as before—Fifth, of the utter mal-adjustment that obtains between his various specifics for the well-being of the people, in that they would conflict with and so neutralize or mutually exterminate the influences for good of each other—as when he argues for emigration along with a poor-rate, though a poor-rate operates powerfully as a restraint on emigration; or argues for a poor-rate along with Savings' Banks, though there be not a deadlier foe than a poor-rate is to the economy that would lay up and accumulate; or tells us of the sums squandered on dissipation by the working classes, and then calculates in thousands of pounds on the amount which they might subscribe for beneficent objects, or reserve for building up an independence to themselves, and yet contends most zealously for a system that would confirm all their habits of improvidence, and prove an effectual barrier in the way of his own glorious anticipations being ever realized.*

* One great antipathy I feel to a larger exposition of the various topics adverted to in this paragraph is that I could not enter

7. But we forget that it is not our special task to review this work—yet, after what we have said, we should deem it an injustice not to speak of its great and various excellence. Though meagre in its theological views, we feel thankful for its recognitions, however general, on the importance of religious education. It is chiefly when warped by his predilection for a legal charity that its accomplished author goes wrong; but, apart from these, nothing can be sounder than many of his views on the prospects of society. The whole of his tenth chapter on the acquisition of landed property by workmen and mechanics is of pre-eminent value; and one principal reason of our dislike to a poor-rate is our belief that it would establish an impassable barrier in the way of this noble perspective being to any extent realized. We think that there are capabilities in the world for a mighty enlargement in the state of our labouring classes; but that wherever a poor-rate obtains it is that which letteth and must be taken out of the way.

8. The only cause which I can assign for his flagrant misunderstanding of what took place in his own immediate neighbourhood, when he tells of the proceedings in St John's and of the total failure of the voluntary system in Glasgow—so very flagrant, that Mr Bosanquet, the most enlightened of all

upon them without repeating myself. I shall therefore simply refer to my articles on Machinery and the Corn-laws in the Appendix to my Political Economy, in Vol. XX. of the series; to chap. i. § 18 of the same work, which is in Vol. XIX; and above all, on the distinction between a National Provision for Indigence and a National Provision for Instruction, to the foot-note in p. 414 of the latter volume.

the English authors who have written on pauperism, speaks of it as a most ludicrous incongruity—the most probable explanation is that he never read me. Perhaps he thinks with his brother Dr Alison, that on this subject I deal in nothing but mere generalisations and flashes of oratory.

9. We must now advert, but with all possible brevity, to a few of the remaining authors who have written very recently upon this question.

10. In Dr Alison's pamphlets, with certain differences of principle between him and his brother, we recognise the same practical errors which are to be found in the larger work on Population, but with some additional and peculiar errors of his own. We shall only notice two of these, which relate not to the law or the history, but to what may be termed the human nature of the question. 1. He tells us that if legal charity be objected to, because it induces a hurtful dependence on the part of its receivers, the same objection lies against private benevolence, which is liable to be alike counted on, and therefore to have a like mischievous and relaxing effect on the industry and good habits of those who are relieved by it. Experimentally, and in effect, there is the widest possible difference between the two cases—between dependence on a felt or fancied right, constituted by law and regularly administered; and dependence on the good will of others. It is true that there is a facile indiscriminate and glaringly ostensible benevolence, which, in a measure and within the sphere of its

operation, works the same mischief as a legalized charity. But there ensues altogether another result, when it is a benevolence which considers as well as compassionates, which times and suits its ministrations to the fully ascertained exigences of each distinct case, which remonstrates and refuses when it judges this best for the well-being of its object—in short, that benevolence which an intelligent and well-principled deacon can at all times bring to bear on his district of well-known families. When thus dealt with, the very delicacy and moral sense of the poor themselves, for which they get too little credit, will prove the best guarantees both for the wisdom and superior effect of such a benevolence as this. But 2. Dr Alison seems to deny *in toto*, that charity can ever be hurtful to the poor themselves by undermining the industry or the carefulness which are the true sources of prosperity—else the Quakers, who support all the poor or unfortunate members of their own body, would be the most unprosperous, instead of being what they are, the most thriving and well-conditioned society of men in England. And he quotes a letter to this effect from a worthy correspondent of that denomination, who obviously, along with himself, holds it to be decisive in favour of the establishment of a universal poor-rate. It is certainly a most important fact to which he depones; but there is a strange oversight on the part of both these benevolent gentlemen, when they convert it into an argument for a legal charity—it being one of the very strongest which can be alleged for the superior efficacy of a moral

and ecclesiastical administration. The rule of an unexcepted aliment to their needy might be quite a safe one for Quakers, who, in the exercise of a corrective discipline, can reform all misconduct, or if they fail, can expel the irreclaimable from their society; and yet may prove a most unsafe one for all and sundry of a population, who, on the ground of right alone, and irrespective of character, are empowered to compel the relief of all destitution, however it may have originated. There is no well-regulated congregation which might not repeat over again the experience of the Quakers; and no well-worked territorial establishment with parishes, each small enough for single congregations, that might not compass the same achievement for the country at large.

11. I should fill a volume did I attempt to follow out all the notanda which I have made on the various publications of Dr Alison. I will therefore satisfy myself with the general remark, that such is the intentness of his benevolent desire for the one object of a Scottish poor-rate, as to have confined and concentrated his regards on one class of testimonies. I will say nothing of the perfect facility and off-handedness, wherewith he has thrown off from him the experience of St John's;*

* Let me only notice the footnote at p. 56 of Dr Alison's Reply to Mr Monypenny. The topic is of runaway husbands, of which he admits in his text, that such cases are chiefly observed in the assessed districts; and then subjoins, "That it is not *exclusively* in these, appears from the statement, that during the time when the poor of St John's parish in Glasgow were supported without assessment, an expense of £702 was incurred for foundlings, illegitimates, and children of runaway parents."—Our first explanation is that the habits of a formerly assessed district

but I must speak of the eagerness wherewith he has seized on all the adverse statements of unac-

are not to be extirpated all at once by the abolition of assessments; and more especially, if it continue to be surrounded by parishes where the assessment still remains in full force. But in point of fact the expense of this particular item formed a very small fraction of the £702. There was a great abridgment in the desertion of the poor by their relatives in St John's; and if the reader will peruse the testimony of one of my deacons in p. 242 of Vol. XVI. of the series, he will find that of three such cases which occurred in less than four years within his proportion of 335 inhabitants, in two of them the husbands were led to return without any expense to the parish—yet in virtue of that peculiar economy by which it stood distinguished from the other parishes in Glasgow.

But if the expense of runaways formed a small item of the £702, this leaves all the greater sum for the expense of the other immoralities which Dr Alison tries and seems not unwilling to fasten on our unassessed parish. But this too admits of explanation. The truth is that, to our great misfortune, the treasurer of the Barony parish (the most populous in Scotland) happened to live within the limits of our parish; and a very great proportion of the exposed children were laid at his door, of course by people of the Barony, and on the idea that the maintenance of the infants fell to be provided for by that parish; and so they were placed on the treasurer s threshold, by way of helping them forward to the kirk session of the Barony.

Now what were the proper effect of this whole matter on the mind of one who looked to it with a fair, not to say a friendly eye? Here was the heavy addition of £702 laid on our collections for cases which should not be provided for out of any ecclesiastical fund at all. Add to this the sum of £351 for lunatics, who ought also to be otherwise provided for; and from these extraneous sources alone, the still heavier addition of more than a thousand pounds had to be sustained, and that by a fund which accomplished to the full all that was promised from it, if it but met the general indigence of the parish. We have already proved that it did so, and expended upwards of a thousand pounds on education to the bargain. But add these other expenses; and it will be found that, so far from operating to the discredit of our system, they supply us with an *argumentum a fortiore* upon its side—and demonstrate that we not only did all we undertook to do, but did it with a surplus of more than two thousand pounds which were disposed of on other purposes besides.

So different are the conclusions come to from the same facts, according to the previous bias of the observer, or to the medium through which he views them.

credited and unofficial informers. We trust that the replies by Dr Haldane of St Andrew's, and the Rev. Mr Elliot of Peebles, have not been thrown away upon him; and we would further recommend for his perusal, the last Annual Report of Dr Easton of Kirriemuir on the pauperism of that parish.* But this exclusiveness, or one-sidedness if it may be so termed, is observable in the use he makes of books as well as men—as of the government volume on Foreign Poor-laws, from which he has extracted the various testimonies which were capable of being forced or compounded into an argument in favour of a legal charity—while from the very same volume Mr Bosanquet presents us with a series of most impressive extracts against a Poor-law, and in favour of the voluntary system. Yet in all this special pleading, there is not, we fully and honestly believe, one taint of disingenuousness. We ascribe it altogether, and certainly it is a marvellous example of it, to the distorting and darkening influence of a most amiable predilection on the optics of one who is under its power—for who can dispute the perfect honour and integrity of Dr Alison; or refrain from doing homage to the ardent and unwearied benevolence, which prompted the authorship that has flowed from his pen, and given birth to publications that, full of errors as they are, have awakened a spirit of inquiry, and will we fondly hope lead to such results as may entitle him to rank among the great public benefactors of Scotland.

* It is entituled "Statements relative to the Pauperism of Kirriemuir" (for 1840.)

12. The next very recent work on pauperism which we shall proceed to notice is that of Mr Bosanquet.* We hail the appearance of such a publication from the south of the Tweed—replete as it is with sound principle; and while breathing the very soul of charity, deprecating and making fearless exposure of the evils which attend the legal administration of it in England. He is one of those very few Englishmen, who can expressly say that a voluntary almsgiving might and ought to supersede the compulsory assessment for the poor —so that, instead of seeking for improvement in any modification of a system that is radically and essentially evil, he would rather that christian feeling and a sense of duty were to operate so powerfully in the hearts of individuals as to permit of its entire abrogation. And he seems throughout to have a just and refreshing confidence in the actual strength of these purer and better elements—so that, on the whole, we have not met a writer who approximates more closely to the view which we ourselves have entertained and cherished for more than a quarter of a century. It will indeed be strange, if this country shall permit herself to be hurried into the adoption of that poor-rate and work-house economy that is so much controverted, or rather so much decried, by the best and ablest thinkers of the very land which it occupies, and is filled with the outcries of resentment against the cruelty of its tender mercies. Were it for no other purpose than to avert this

* On the Rights of the Poor and Christian Almsgiving, by G. R. Bosanquet, Esq.

sore evil from our borders, we should hope that Mr Bosanquet's work might become well known and be much read in Scotland.

13. He has been pleased to give a pretty full account of our procedure in St John's. The differences betwixt us are more apparent than real. For example when he says (p. 411) that "the fault of the St John's system was that it was too economical and mercenary; it was too much tested and examined upon the principle of saving"—this admits of an easy rectification. In point of effect the St John's system was upheld at a far less expense for its public and visible distributions than the system which it was meant to supersede; and the exhibition of this fact was fitted to conciliate those who had the power either to discourage or to extend it. But it was not instituted for the purpose of saving; or, in the language of Bosanquet, on the principle of saving. It was instituted for the sake chiefly of its moral, and through these, of its economical benefits to the population—in that it removed temptations to improvidence on the one hand; and on the other reawakened, to the degree at least of their own natural vigour, the duties and affections both of relatives and neighbours when any distress occurred within the sphere of their respective operations. It was a matter of deepest interest and gratification to ourselves, when we found that the internal charity of so large a plebeian mass left room for such few applications to the wealthy beyond its limits—not that we hold them discharged from the obligations of benevolence, or have the least desire that they

should be exempted from sacrifices large in proportion to their means. We have the fullest sympathy with all the principles, both ethical and scriptural, of Mr Bosanquet, on the subject of this virtue; and the only semblance which I can perceive of a distinction betwixt us is—that whereas he perhaps would make it his first and most strenuous aim to enforce the duties of the rich, I confess it my chief earnestness to press home the duties of the poor—thinking, as I do, that their best interests, as well as truest dignity, lie in the right observation of them. But I would spare neither class—though not so anxious for the shillings of the rich to expend on almsgiving among the common people, as I am for their pounds, and that in goodly number too, to erect and maintain the institutes, by which the health and the morals and the christian education of all might be provided for. It is likely that a deacon cast in the one mould would look more intently to the state of the parochial collections, and so stimulate the givers to a greater liberality in their offerings—while, if cast in the other mould, he would look more intently to the state of the parochial demand; and, after he had inculcated on receivers the duty of a right moderation, would try as much as possible to anticipate the necessity of a public relief by stimulating both neighbours and kinsfolk to the exercise of a larger charity than before—thereby earning the praise and pre-eminence of that deacon who did his duty best, in that he gave the court of deaconship the least to do. Nor would he discourage the generosity of the rich, however

much he may like that it should be unseen and untalked of—in which case, he would vastly prefer it to any organic or visible dispensation of poor's money. This generosity, in fact, we could have easily drawn upon to a ten-fold greater amount; but were restrained by the impulse it would give to a movement from the contiguous parishes, and by the unfortunate necessity from which we never were relieved of providing for the incomers from all other parts of the city. After this explanation, it should not be difficult to perceive, that, substantially and in principle, we are at one. At all events we have read this little work with unbounded satisfaction; and trust it may be the happy presage of that deep radical and thorough reform which is still awanting for the pauperism of England.

14. But there is still another work which might well claim a high and important place in this enumeration—Carlyle on Chartism—abounding in flashes of light as well as flashes of humour; and, albeit of quaint and parti-coloured garb, in which we can discern both the antique and the exotic and withal the fresh and strikingly original—yet charged throughout not only with the deep feeling, but bating a few slight exceptions with the deepest philosophy of this subject. 1. He is right in his denunciation of the 'Let alone' maxim (Laissez-faire) as a universal principle; but his remarks tend to the universal abjuration of it—whereas it were about the highest political wisdom to make discrimination between the things, as commerce, to which it is applicable; and the things, as edu-

cation or public health, to which it is not applicable. 2. He is right in holding up for the amusement of his reader the imagination that our common people, the Toms and Sallys whether of town or country, are to be enlisted on the side of Malthusianism, by their being taught the lessons of Malthus themselves; but he mistakes, if he charge all Malthusians with this ludicrous absurdity. Theory when of any worth at all is experience generalized; and, both theoretically and experimentally, nothing can be more impregnably or unassailably just than the doctrine of Mr Malthus —yet the way for carrying it into practical effect, is not directly or formally to indoctrinate the general population therewith. It is to furnish them with a sound education, both the education of principle and the education of letters; and more particularly still, to gather them, boyhood and manhood, into well-taught congregations— where they might become the subjects of a right ecclesiastical discipline, and have frequent intercourse with the best and wisest of their neighbourhood in well-organized and well-worked parishes. This of itself would beget a new taste and better habits—or, more correctly, would revive the tastes and habits of the olden time, and lead to the practice of certain Malthusian virtues, which were exemplified by a peasantry whom Mr Carlyle loves and reveres, long before Malthus was ever heard of. He may perhaps remember, I do, the *plenishings* and *providings* anterior to every marriage of humble life in Scotland, the products of a housewifery that secured a respectable outset

at the commencement of every new family; and the guarantees of such a thrift and management with both the parties in this alliance, as kept them economically right and respectable to the end of their days. 3. He is right in both his specifics of Emigration and Education; and I would only add, that while the former of these two remedies might only be of temporary, the other should and must be of perpetual appliance. On a system of national emigration, without a system of education alike national, there behoved to be a constant generation of vice and misery, and hence the constant overflow of a wretched and wicked population, as of scum upon distant lands—Whereas if contemporaneous with one great and wholesale act of emigration, or the large emigration at most of a few years, there were instituted a full apparatus of schools and churches—then afterwards might the emigration, no longer defrayed from public funds, be altogether spontaneous—as of redundant capitalists seeking a profitable investiture for their money, at the head of well-paid labourers going forth not as before under the impulse of want, but rather under the impulse of a generous ambition, seeking from their now higher platform at home, a still higher status abroad in countries of larger capability than their own. 4. But he is most of all and pre-eminently right in his demand for the popular education being religious; and profoundly wise, when he prophesies of our coming regeneration, (p. 101,) that it will be the achievement, not of one or a few gigantic intellects, but the product of a wide and general co-operation among

men of ordinary and every day power. Genius is rare—but worth and virtue are diffusible, and can be multiplied indefinitely. Altogether, and notwithstanding our demur to its paradox of might being right, we rejoice in this little work of Mr Carlyle's, as full of wholesome principle, and fitted to impress on minds of a higher class, sound and right views of philanthropy.

15. We conclude this section with the mention of our own home-made compositions, already too well-known or in the way of being so, to require from us any specification of their merits and peculiarities. 1. First and foremost we would name the works of Mr Monypenny—characterized throughout by the soundest views, and from the weight of his well-earned authority, of greatest possible value to the cause which he has espoused. 2. Mr Lewis's account of his parish in Dundee, which, along with his other Tracts, evinces the most intimate acquaintance with the habitudes of a town population, as well as the utmost graphic force and fidelity in his description of them. 3. Mr Begg's account of the Pauperism in his Parish of Libberton, also a pamphlet of great excellence. 4. Report of the Committee on Pauperism to the last General Assembly (1841), the suggestions of which, on the benefits of a more strictly parochial economy in large cities, are peculiarly valuable. 5. Mr Milne's Report of a Committee of Landed Proprietors is a composition of great merit, notwithstanding the highly exceptionable remarks which are subjoined to it. We hope that it will soon come forth free of this alloy in an expurgated

edition, and that all which is obnoxious and wrong will be disclaimed by the Proprietors as apocryphal. 6. The eulogy on these Remarks by Mr John Cook, in the footnote at p. 35, of his pamphlet on the Scottish Poor, and with which we can have no sympathy, has not made us insensible to the value of his own performance, as a clear, conclusive, and very intelligent exposition of the subject.

Section XIII.—*Application of the whole Argument, and more particularly to Scotland.*

1. A method grounded on these principles and views might be adopted anywhere.* Though there be no office in the Church of England corresponding fully with that of our Deacon—this need not restrain an English clergyman, by means of lay assistants, from the practical establishment of our system in his own parish. How the law shall be brought into harmony therewith is a different matter, and on which we do not here enter —more especially, as we have considered it at great length in another place,† where we have attempted to explain first the parliamentary and then the parochial treatment of the whole ques-

* We can imagine nothing more perfect than the mechanism put into operation by the Jansenist Bishop (of Alet) throughout his whole diocese—as described in the Port Royal Memoirs, Vol. III. p. 231, &c., by M. A. Schimmelpenninck.

† See chapters XIV, XV, and XVI, of the Christian and Economic Polity of a Nation.

tion. It is a question very far from being yet conclusively settled in England; nor will it ever, we conceive, be placed on a sound or permanent footing but by what we term a blow at the root—or proceeding on this essential distinction between justice and humanity, that, whereas it is the proper use and function of law to enforce the one; the other, and more especially in as far as the relief of general indigence is concerned, should not be so enforced, it being that wherewith on every ground both of principle and expediency law ought not to intermeddle. The admission of a right in the destitute to a maintenance, in conjunction with the unnatural and revolting severities which have been placed as a barrier in the way of their making it good, is the attempt to compensate one error by another—a blunder in the essence of the law, by a blunder in the practical administration of it. Altogether it is a violent incongruity; and therefore impossible that it should succeed, or be of long endurance in any commonwealth. The law of the statute-book ought to be expunged, that the law of kindness might have free scope for her energies on the field which is properly her own.

2. In Scotland we have the advantage of being able to commence, or rather to restore this system, by putting it into the hands of men vested with an official character, and bearing an ancient and well-known official designation—thereby securing for it a readier coalescence in the popular mind of this country; and where, instead of being resisted as a novelty or violence done to our ecclesiastical constitution, it will be viewed as a replacement of

that which had worn away from it. We may count on all the greater facility of its re-establishment in Scotland, in that it is already so familiar to the recognition of Scotchmen. It is in fact part and parcel of her old parochial system; and, in arguing the sufficiency of that system for the right management of the poor, it is no more than justice that full and free play should be allowed to it—and, more especially, that we should be permitted to reason on the high capabilities of an office expressly instituted in other times both as the scriptural and the soundly expedient way, by which to ascertain and provide for the destitution of all more or less helpless families.

3. It is not that we hold a deaconship indispensable in the great majority of our Scottish parishes—where, in spite of every exaggeration to the contrary, things go on smoothly and prosperously; and there is no crying destitution whatever, on account of which any change in the existing management is called for. It is not then as for the cure or removal of a malady that we desiderate the restitution of this order of men, even in our most virtuous and best-conditioned parishes—but for the sake of a great positive amelioration, for which there is still indefinite room, in the economics of our common people. We feel quite assured that under the guidance and with the frequent converse of enlightened men, they could be brought up to a far higher point of comfort and sufficiency than they at present stand at. The very intercourse with their superiors to which it would give rise, and of which there is now such a woeful lack

in British society, would of itself tend to elevate and humanize them. There are many ways in which this ascending movement could be impressed on them—as through habits of thrift and temperance and reading, and in the cleanliness and order of their houses; and would magistrates and justices but co-operate with these lay officials of the church, and place a limit on the number of public houses in every little vicinity, this alone would everywhere work out a mighty enlargement in the state and condition of our Scottish peasantry. But in thus seeking after the re-establishment of a universal deaconship, we confess that we have a higher object still than merely to better what may be termed the secularities of the working classes. However intently we may desire the improvement of their temporal state, the far more earnest and intent aim of every real Christian will be the good of their souls; and for this view we hold it most important, that our elders should be relieved of all that is secular in their present charges—or in other words, that the eldership of the church should be spiritualized. We rejoice in the efforts which are now making to regenerate this part of our ecclesiastical system; nor are we aware of aught that would conduce more to the purity and efficiency of our Kirk sessions, than if the members of these parochial courts, vested exclusively with ecclesiastical functions, were regarded strictly and altogether in the light of ecclesiastical men—whose office was entirely a sacred one, as to pray with the sick and the dying, to stimulate the Christian education, and generally to take cognizance of the

religious state and habit of the families in their respective districts. With a hard-working clergyman in every parish, and a body of elders to assist him in holy things, and deacons to look after the temporalities of the people, we should behold the ecclesiastical system of Scotland in full operation; and with the blessing of God, we should also behold as the palpable result of it, a hale prosperous and well-conditioned commonalty, in a state of general if not of universal sufficiency—having a present fulfilment in the promise of the life that now is, as well as a bright and hopeful anticipation in the promise of the life that is to come.*

4. But it is in towns and over-peopled parishes, where the service of deacons is most urgently and immediately required—and that not merely to effect an amelioration as in country parishes, but to heal a sore and mischievous distemper. The remedy which we propose is no daring or untried novelty; but has the wisdom of ancient and venerable sages, and the experience of a whole nation to recommend it. To find it, we have but to ask for the old paths, or good old way and to walk therein.† To us there is something peculiarly delightful in the blending of elements which are not heterogeneous, though hitherto they may have occupied different places and far asunder from each other, in the imaginations of men. The office of a deacon as described in the original formularies of our kirk has long fallen into desuetude; and it may appear to some a grotesque and incongruous com-

* 1 Tim. iv. 8. † Jer. vi. 16.

bination, when we propose to revive it in the persons of our modern city gentlemen, versant it may be in the philosophy and recent economics of our present day; and on whom we would fasten the name and the investiture of functionaries, scarcely known in Scotland since the time of our remote grandfathers. It may look to some like a union of contrarieties—yet a union, we are persuaded, which, when realized and acted on, will be found prolific of the greatest blessings to society. The devices and discoveries of our present age, its savings' banks, and parish libraries, and mechanic schools, will not be the less but ten-fold more effective, when brought to bear on the population in the garb and with the authority of an old ecclesiastical institute.

5. We cannot image a greater infatuation, than, if with such a power in reserve, and in resorting to which we but recur to the wholesome practice of other days—we shall nevertheless choose rather to precipitate ourselves into a system, alien to all the habits of Scotchmen; and, which, so far from being conclusively established in the country whence we propose to borrow it, is there only upon trial—still a doubtful experiment, subjected by a decree of their legislature to the questionary process of a few years longer, and meanwhile assailed by fierce and bitter outcries all over their land. Our advice is not to innovate, but restore; not to rush on the adventurous new, but to re-establish and to return to the well-tried old—and which, because so rich in the experience of the past, holds out the best guarantee for its promises of the future.

We complain of the insufficiency of our system, after having inflicted on it a grievous mutilation. All we ask for it is, that the mutilation shall be replaced; and then let us see, whether when the parochial apparatus is made as perfect as before, it will not prove as efficient as before. And how much more consonant, we would remark, with the sound philosophy of observation—is it to proceed on the intimate household converse of a deaconship for each parish, than on the wide and general surveys of a workhouse union for a number of parishes. It makes all the difference between a distant and therefore superficial view on the one hand, and a thorough we had almost said microscopical inspection on the other—whether a number of parishes shall be thrown into one field of superintendence, and placed under an elevated Board of Directors; or each parish shall be broken down into a number of small and manageable sections, each given in charge to a friendly guardian, who might hold weekly, it may be daily converse with the families. Under the one economy, they will reach to but a slender acquaintance with the inner mechanism of the subject on which they operate, and that notwithstanding their busy manufacture of programmes and queries and schedules of goodly enumeration. Their circulars and the returns to their circulars will not do much for them; but in all probability will leave these dealers in wholesale just as wise as before. Under the other economy, we open a way to the hidden privacies of the question, to the springs and principles of the living human nature concerned with it, and which form

in reality the *ipsa corpora* of the whole problem—for the right discernment of which it is not a rare metaphysical acumen which is required; but the everyday intelligence and common sense of men in ordinary life, so circumstanced as that they might have familiar access to the hearts and the homes of our population.

6. And here we are tempted to repeat the challenge which we have already made for a trial of the St John's experiment over again, and that on the most pauperized district of Glasgow, which can be fixed upon. The conditions that we require are—First, a population not exceeding two thousand—Second, a church that can hold one thousand sitters, with a commensurate amount of cheap schooling for the young—Third, a preference at every seat-letting to the parishioners, either at indefinitely low seat-rents or no seat-rents at all, which condition can only be made good by an adequate endowment for the clergyman—Fourth, a protection which if not legally might yet be conventionally secured against the influx of paupers from all the other city parishes, they having a reciprocal protection from the new parish—Fifth, the allocation of the weekly collections to all the new cases of *general indigence alone*, so as that the church offerings shall not be burdened with the cases either of immorality or of institutional disease. We doubt not that there are still surviving elders and deacons of the St John's school in sufficient number to undertake such an experiment, (six or eight of each class would be fully competent to the task.) Let these for once at least have the ap-

pointment of the clergyman; and then we shall brave all the discredit which might accrue to our argument—if they do not make it palpable in two or three years, that without a compulsory provision, and with the help of no other public fund than what is gathered from the Sabbath plates they will meet every application for relief, and bring the parish into a better economic condition than before. We do not want to complicate such an experiment by tacking a rich parish to a poor one. Such an offer would embarrass ourselves, because we think it would paralyze the operation; and we should therefore greatly prefer to work the poor parish single-handed. Surely to allow such an experiment before resolving on so momentous a change in our system as is contemplated by the advocates of an English pauperism, were but in accordance with that inductive or Baconian spirit which is as wise in practical economics, as it is sound in philosophy. And surely to risk the trifling loss that might be incurred by its failure, were better than to incur the certain expenditure of £800,000 a-year for the pauperism of all Scotland, or of £80,000 for that of Glasgow alone.

7. By a repetition of this process we might obtain the same result for a whole city, a whole province, or for the country at large. In other words, the extension of its church, and the extinction of its pauperism, might go hand in hand.* The

* The following is a very general outline of the scheme of Church Extension, for which we attempted to obtain the consent of government:—1. A grant of a-year to each of our unendowed churches (lately Chapels-of-Ease). 2. A prospective en-

moral and the economical reformations would proceed contemporaneously; and so as to verify the celebrated saying of Burke, that education (most emphatically true of the high education of principle), while the only effectual, is far the cheapest defence of every nation against its sorest and most formidable evils. Our specific, and we know of no other, by which to heal the great national distemper of England, or at least to ward off the contagion of it from our own land—is a sufficient number of well-served churches, and well-taught schools. Let it not become the scorn either of economists or statesmen, because of the two-fold blessing which it is fitted to accomplish—raising the character along with the comfort of our population: Or because while it achieves their salvation from many of the ills of life, its chief aim is to

dowment to the same extent for each of our New Churches. 3. This grant never to be bestowed without an equivalent return by the church which receives it, in a certain regulated and moderate scale of seat-rents for the parish families. 4. We should hold it a fair and desirable stipulation, that every new church so endowed should undertake for the pauperism of its own parish; and that the produce of its ordinary collections (meanwhile indispensable for the support of the clergyman) should be given up for this object.

I may in this last foot-note meet the question of Dr Alison—why not allow both objects to be alike provided for and go on contemporaneously?—that is have his poor-rate for the relief of destitution, and at the same time our church extension for the religious instruction of the people. Our objection to this is, that the first would neutralize the second; but I will give no further explanation of this here, and only refer to what I have said years before on this very suggestion in Vol. I. p. 427, of my Christian and Economic Polity of a Nation, being Vol. XIV. of the series—in my Evidence before the Commons' Committee at p. 389 of Vol. III. of the same work, being Vol. XVI. of the series, and in Vol. II. pp. 15—18, of my Political Economy, being Vol. XX. of the series.

provide them with a higher salvation in the good of their eternity.

8. In these times of imminent peril to the Church of Scotland, and when her very existence as a National Establishment is at stake, it may be thought that we have not chosen the likeliest season for gaining attention to our arguments, and far less for the practical adoption of such measures as we have ventured to recommend. But even in the most favourable circumstances, we are not very sanguine of an immediate reception for our views; and conceive it far more probable that men will seek for relief from the evils of pauperism in a succession of palliatives and trifling modifications, than go back to the first elements of the question, or seek to eradicate the principle on which the system of a legal and compulsory provision is founded. It would not surprise us, if, by a series of failures, in shifting from one expedient to another, and after that experience had demonstrated they were but shifting from one error to another—we should not wonder if as by the indirect process in mathematics, states and parishes by a practical *reductio ad absurdum*, were brought to the truth at last. We look on the last great attempt for the reform of English pauperism as but one step in this process—even as the Acts of Mr Gilbert, Sturges Bourne, and others, have been successively thrown aside as things tried and found wanting. Let us hope that this tentative process will not be lengthened out indefinitely. All that we require for Scotland is, that Law will learn to be observant of her own proper

boundaries, and make no inroad beyond them. This were an effectual remedy for all our disorders. Would the civil authority but cease to be a usurper on a province which does not belong to her, and retire within her own domain—then should we be ecclesiastically right, in being permitted to give unto Cesar the things which are Cesar's, and to God the things which are God's; and economically right, in being permitted to give unto justice the things of justice, and to humanity the things of humanity.

APPENDIX.

For the sake of those readers who do not possess the Series of my Works so often referred to in this publication, we now subjoin such of the extracts specified in the foregoing pages, as we deem of most importance to our argument.

I Section I. § 11.—*Moral Benefit of Parochial Associations.*

The great defence which such a Society establishes against pauperism is, the superior tone of dignity and independence which it imparts to the character of him who supports it. He stands on the high ground of being a dispenser of charity; and before he can submit to become a recipient of charity, he must let himself farther down than a poor man in ordinary circumstances. To him the transition will be more violent; and the value of this principle will be acknowledged by all who perceive that it is reluctance on the part of the poor man to become a pauper, which forms the mighty barrier against the extension of pauperism. A man, by becoming the member of a benevolent association, puts himself into the situation of a giver. He stands at a greater distance than before from the situation of a receiver. He has a wider interval to traverse before he can reach this point. He will feel it a greater degradation; and to save himself from it, he will put forth all his powers of frugality and exertion. The idea of restraining pauperism by external administrations seems now to be generally abandoned. But could we thus enter into the hearts of the poor, we would get in at the root of the mischief, and by fixing there a habit of economy and independence, more would be done for them, than by all the liberalities of all the opulent.

In those districts of Scotland where poor rates are unknown the descending avenue which leads to pauperism is powerfully guarded by the stigma which attaches to it. Remove this stigma, and our cottagers, now rich in the possession of contentment and industry, would resign their habits and crowd into the avenue by thousands. The shame of descending is the powerful stimulus which urges them to a manful contest with the difficulties of their situation, and which bears them through in all the pride of honest independence. Talk of this to the people of the South, and it sounds in their ears like an Arcadian story. But there is not a clergyman amongst us who has not witnessed the operation of the principle in all its fineness and in all its moral delicacy; and surely a testimony is due to those village heroes who so nobly struggle with the difficulties of pauperism, that they may shun and surmount its degradation.

A Parochial Association gives additional vigour and buoyancy to this elevated principle. The trifle which it exacts from its contributor is, in truth, never missed by him; but it puts him in the high attitude of a giver, and every feeling which it inspires is on the side of independence and delicacy. Go over each of these feelings separately, and you find that they are all fitted to fortify his dislike at the shame and dependence of pauperism. There is a consciousness of importance which unavoidably attaches to the share he has taken in the support and direction of a public charity. There is the expanding effect o. the information which comes to him through the medium of the circulated Reports, which lays before him the mighty progress of an institution reaching to all countries, and embracing in its ample grasp, the men of all latitudes and all languages, which deeply interests him in the object and perpetuates his desire of promoting it. A man with his heart so occupied, and his attention so directed, is not capable of a voluntary descent to pauperism. He has, in fact, become a more cultivated and intellectual being than formerly. His mind gathers an enlargement from the wide and animating contemplations which are set before him; and we appeal to the reflection of every reader if such a man will descend as readily to a dependence on the charity of others, as he whose mind is void of information and whose feelings are void of dignity.

In such associations, the rich and the poor meet together. They share in one object, and are united by the sympathy of one feeling, and of one interest. We have not to look far into human nature to be convinced of the happy and the harmonizing influence which this must have upon society; and how, in the glow of one common cordiality, all asperity and discontent must give way to the kindlier principles of our nature. The

days have been when the very name of an association carried terror and suspicion along with it. In a Parochial Association for religious objects there is nothing which our rulers need to be afraid of; and they may rest assured that the moral influence of such institutions is all on the side of peace and loyalty. But to confine myself to the present argument. Who does not see that they exalt the general tone and character of our people; that they bring them nearer to the dignity of superior and cultivated life; and that, therefore, though their direct aim is not to mitigate poverty, they go a certain way to dry up the most abundant of its sources?—*Influence of Parochial Associations for the Moral and Spiritual Good of Mankind.*

II. Section I. § 13.—*Influence of Juxtaposition on the imitative propensity*

There is also much in the juxtaposition of the taught to one another. This brings what may be called the gregarious principle into fuller play. What children will not do singly, they will do with delight and readiness in a flock. This comes powerfully to the aid of the other advantages which belong to the local system—where the teacher will not only experience a kind reception at his first outset among the families; but will find, that, in the course of a very few rounds, he engages, for his scholars, not a small proportion of the young, but a great majority of those in the district. And if he just follow up each act of absence, on the part of the children, by a call of inquiry upon their parents, he will succeed in controlling them to regular and continued attendance—a habit, which, with a slight exertion of care upon his part, may be so kept up and strengthened, as to obtain, in the little vicinage over which he presides, all the certainty of a mechanical operation.—*Christian and Economic Polity of a Nation.*

It may be difficult to explain (but it is not the less real on that account) the prodigious virtue which lies in its being not a scattered, but a compact and contiguous population—in consequence of which the direct influence which passes between the clergyman and his people, is mightily aided by the sympathy of a common feeling, and a common interest among themselves. As the matter stands, juxtaposition forms no security whatever for acquaintanceship—insomuch that the members of distinct households might live for years under the same roof, unknowing and unknown to each other. We know of no expedient better fitted to overcome this alienation, to annihilate this moral distance between our contiguous families, and more espe-

cially in the plebeian quarters of the town, than the re-establishment of this local, or strictly parochial system, in the midst of them. Let next-door neighbours be supplied with one common object of reverence and regard, in the clergyman who treats them alike as members of the same parochial family; let his church be the place of common repair upon the Sabbaths; let his sermon, which told the same things to all, suggest the common topics, on which the similarly impressed might enter into conversations, that begin and strengthen more and more the friendship between them; let the intimacies of the parish children be formed and ripened together, at the same school—these all help as cementing influences by which to bind this aggregate of human beings into one community, and with a speed and certainty, now by many inconceivable, to set up a village or domestic economy, even in the heart of a crowded metropolis. It will at once be seen, with what force and celerity this consummation would be hastened forward by the movements of a clergyman, who, in the cultivation of his parochial domain, that home-walk of his daily and delightful labours, would have countless opportunities of grouping together the inmates of every little vicinity; and who, in their very relation to himself as a common centre, would come to recognise and to feel the affinity of a certain mutual relationship to each other. And here, perhaps, that reciprocal influence will be better understood, by which the week-day attentions of the minister to his parish are sure to be followed up, when there is room and opportunity, by the Sabbath attendance of the people upon his church. If he have but obtained an initial footing of this sort in his parish, the example will spread,—passing, as if by infection, from one neighbour to another; and he, reaping the fruit of his perseverance as a house-going minister, in yearly accessions to himself of a church-going people. If he will only bind himself to them as his people, they will at length bind themselves to him as their minister.—*Right Ecclesiastical Economy of a Large Town.*

III. Section I. § 14.—*Accumulation of small efforts.*

We read, in the book of Genesis, how few the righteous men were, that would have sufficed to save a city from destruction. It is cheering to calculate on the powers of human agency, and how much even an individual may do, when those powers are wisely and steadily directed; and, above all, what is the number of individuals required, who, if each, labouring in his own duteous and devoted walk, would altogether assure the magni-

ficent result of a country recovered from vice and violence, and placed conclusively beyond the reach of all moral and all political disorders.

This result will, at length, be arrived at, not by the working of one mighty organization, for the achievement of great things, but by the accumulation of small things—not by men whose taste it is to contemplate what is splendid in philanthropy, but by men whose practical talent it is, to do what is substantial in philanthropy—not by men, who eye, with imaginative transport, the broad and boundless expanse of humanity, but by men, who can work in drudgery and in detail, at the separate portions of it. But, before we can sit down and be satisfied with doing thoroughly and well, that which lies within the compass of our strength—there must be a conquest over the pride of our nature —there must be a calling in of the fancy, from those specious generalities, which have lured so many from the path of sober and productive exertion—we must resign the glory of devising a magnificent whole; and count it enough to have rendered, in our narrow sphere, and in our little day, the contribution of a part to the good of human society. The whole it is only for Him to contemplate fully, whose agents we are, and who assigns a portion of usefulness to each severally, as He will. It is our part to follow the openings of His Providence, and to do, with our might, that work which He hath evidently put into our hands. Any great moral or economical change in the state of a country, is not the achievement of one single arm, but the achievement of many; and though one man walking in the loftiness of his heart, might like to engross all the fame of it, it will remain an impotent speculation, unless thousands come forward to share among them all the fatigue of it. It is not to the labour of those who are universalists in science, that she stands indebted for her present solidity, or her present elevation, but to the separate labours of many—each occupying his own little field, and heaping, on the basis of former acquisitions, his own distinct and peculiar offering. And it is just so in philanthropy. The spirit of it has gone marvellously abroad amongst us of late years; but still clouded and misled by the bewildering glare which the fancy of ambitious man is apt to throw around his own undertakings. He would be the sole creator of a magnificent erection, rather than a humble contributor to it, among a thousand more, each as necessary and important as himself. And yet, would he only resign his speculations, and give himself to the execution of a task, to which his own personal faculties were adequate, he would meet with much to compensate the loss of those splendid delusions, which have hitherto engrossed him. There would be less of the glare of publicity, but there would be more of the kindliness of a

quiet and sheltered home. He could not, by his own solitary strength, advance the little stone into a great mountain, but the worth and the efficacy of his labours, will be sure to recommend them to the imitation of many; and the good work will spread, by example, from one individual, and from one district to another; and, though he may be lost to observation, in the growing magnitude of the operations which surround him, yet will he rejoice even in his very insignificance, as the befitting condition for one to occupy, among the many millions of the species to which he belongs; and it will be enough for him, that he has added one part, however small, to that great achievement, which can only be completed by the exertions of an innumerable multitude—and the fruit of which is to fill the whole earth.—*Christian and Economic Polity of a Nation.*

IV. Section II. § 6.—*Delicacy of the Lower Orders, when rightly and judiciously dealt with.*

There is a delusive fear to which inexperience is liable upon this subject, as if there was a very general rapacity among the families of the poor, which, if not appeased out of the capabilities of a public fund, would render it altogether unsafe for any private individual, in the upper walks of society, to move at large among their habitations. It is not considered how much it is that this rapacity is whetted by the imagination of a great collective treasure, at the disposal of this individual. An elder who is implicated with pauperism, or the agent of a charitable society who is known to be such, will most certainly light up a thousand mercenary expectations, and be met by a thousand mercenary demands, in the course of his frequent visitations among the people. But let him stand out to the general eye as dissociated with all the concerns of an artificial charity; and let it be his sole ostensible aim to excite the religious spirit of the district, or to promote its education—and he may, every day of his life, walk over the whole length and breadth of his territory, without meeting with any demand that is at all unmanageable, or that needs to alarm him. The truth is, that there is a far greater sufficiency among the lower classes of society than is generally imagined; and our first impressions of their want and wretchedness are generally by much too aggravated; nor do we know a more effectual method of reducing these impressions than to cultivate a closer acquaintance with their resources, and their habits, and their whole domestic economy. It is certainly in the power of artificial expedients to create artificial desires; and to call out a host of applications,

that would never nave otnerwise been made. And we know of nothing that leads more directly and more surely to this state of things, than a great regular provision for indigence, obtruded, with all the characters of legality and certainty and abundance, upon the notice of the people. But wherever the securities which nature hath established for the relief and mitigation of extreme distress are not so tampered with—where the economy of individuals, and the sympathy of neighbours, and a sense of the relative duties among kinsfolk, are left, without disturbance, to their own silent and simple operation;—it will be found that there is nothing so formidable in the work of traversing a whole mass of congregated human beings, and of encountering all the clamours, whether of real or of fictitious necessity, that may be raised by our appearance amongst them. So soon as it is understood that all which is given by such an adventurous philanthropist is given by himself; and so soon as acquaintanceship is formed between him and the families; and so soon as the conviction of his good-will has been settled in their hearts, by the repeated observation they have made of his kindness and personal trouble, for their sakes;—then the sordid appetite which would have been maintained, in full vigour, so long as there was the imagination of a fund, of which he was merely an agent of conveyance, will be shamed, and that nearly into extinction, the moment that this imagination is dissolved. Such an individual will meet with a limit to his sacrifices, in the very delicacy of the poor themselves; and it will be possible for him to expatiate among hundreds of his fellows, and to give a Christian reception to every proposal he meets with; and yet, after all, with the humble fraction of a humble revenue, to earn the credit of liberality amongst them. We know not, indeed, how one can be made more effectually to see, with his own eyes, the superfluousness of all public and legalised charity, than just to assume a district; and become the familiar friend of the people who live in it; and to do for them the thousand nameles offices of Christian regard; and to encourage, in every judicious and inoffensive way, their dependence upon themselves, and their fellow-feeling one for another. Such a process of daily observation as this will do more than all political theory can do, to convince him with what safety the subsistence of a people may be left to their own capabilities; and how the modern pauperism of our days is a superstructure altogether raised on the basis of imposture and worthlessness—a basis which the very weight of the superstructure is fitted to consolidate and to extend.

There is one style of companionship with the poor, that is fitted to call forth a rapacity, which all the ministrations of opulence cannot appease. There is another style of it, that is fitted to call forth delicacies of a far softer and more sensitive

character than they often get credit for. The agent of a society for the relief of indigence, who carries a visible commission along with him, is sure to be assailed, in full and open cry, at every corner, with the importunities of alleged want. The bearer of a moral and spiritual dispensation will not, in the long run, be the less welcome of the two, nor will his kindness be less appreciated, nor will the courtesy of his oft-repeated attentions fail of sending the charm of a still gladder sensation into the heart. The truth is, that it is in the absence of every temptation, either to cunning or sordidness, when the intercourse between the rich and the poor is in the end most gratifying, as well as most beneficial, to both; and these are the occasions upon which the unction of a finer influence is felt, with each of the parties, than ever can have place in the dispensations of common charity. When one goes ostensibly forth among the people as an almoner, the recoil that is felt by them, from the exposure of their necessities, is overborne, at the very first interview; and the barrier of delicacy is forced, and forced irrecoverably: so as that deceit and selfishness shall henceforth become perpetual elements in every future act of fellowship between them. When one goes forth among them on a spiritual enterprise, and introduces himself on a topic that reduces to a general level the accidental distinctions of humanity, and addresses a poor man as a sharer in the common hopes and common interests of the species, he is relieved, for the time, from all sense of inferiority, nor will he be the first to revive it in his own breast, by descending to the language of complaint or supplication. It is thus that the acquaintanceship between the rich and the poor, which is sustained by converse with them on all other topics save that of their necessities, is sure to increase the reluctance of the poor to obtrude this last topic on the attentions of the wealthy. It is thus that a mere Sabbath teacher comes speedily into contact with such delicacies, among the lower orders, as are not suspected even to exist by the administrators of a city hospital. And it is thus, that under a right Christian economy, there would arise, in the hearts, and among the habitations of the poor themselves, a most effectual barrier against all that importunate and insatiable urgency of demand, which has been so fostered among the people by debasing pauperism.—*Christian and Economic Polity of a Nation.*

V. Section II. § 11.—*Strength of Popular Sympathy.*

There is a statement, made by Mr. Buxton, in his valuable work upon Prisons, which is strongly illustrative of the force

of human sympathy. In the gaol of Bristol, the allowance of bread to the criminals is beneath the fair rate of human subsistence; and, to the debtors, there is no allowance at all, leaving these last to be provided by their own proper resources, or by the random charity of the town. It has occasionally happened that both these securities have failed them: and that some of their number would inevitably have perished of hunger, had not the criminals, rather than endure the spectacle of so much agony, given a part of their own scanty allowance, and so shared in the suffering along with them. It is delightful to remark, from this, that the sympathy of humble life, instead of the frail and imaginative child of poetry, is a plant of such sturdy endurance as to survive even the roughest of those processes by which a human being is conducted to the last stages of depravity. Now, if the working of this good principle may thus be detected among the veriest outcasts of human society, shall we confide nothing to its operation among the people and the families of ordinary life? If such an intense and unbroken fellow feeling be still found to exist, even after the career of profligacy is run, are we to count upon none of its developments before the career of profligacy is entered on? In other words, if in prisons there be the guarantee of natural sympathy against the starvation of the destitute, is it too sanguine an affirmation of our species, that there is the same and a stronger guarantee in parishes? The truth is, such is the recoil of one human being from the contemplation of extreme hunger in another, that the report of a perishing household, in some deepest recess of a city lane, would inflict a discomfort upon the whole neighbourhood, and call out succour, in frequent and timely forthgoings, from the contiguous families. We are aware that pauperism lays an interdict upon this beautiful process. Pauperism relaxes the mutual care and keepership which, but for it, would have been in more strenuous operation; and has deadened that certain feeling of responsibility which would have urged and guided to many acts of beneficence. There can be little doubt, that the opening up of this great artificial fountain has reduced that natural fountain, the waters of which are so deeply seated, and so diffusively spread, throughout the whole mass and interior of a population. But, in countries where pauperism is unknown, and popular sympathy is allowed to have its course, it sends forth supplies upon human want which are altogether incalculable; and still, in our own country, is it ready to break forth in streams of rich and refreshing compensation, so soon as pauperism is done away.—*Christian and Economic Polity of a Nation.*

VI. SECTION II. § 13.—*Distinction between the two cases of Disease and Indigence as objects of Public Charity.*

Laying out of sight the objections you have stated to any general principle of compulsory assessment, do you not conceive that there are certain classes of misery and distress for which relief may be safely afforded, and which, if safely to be afforded, ought to be afforded?—I think there is a very great distinction between cases of general indigence and certain other cases of distress, which may be relieved with all safety.

What would be the distinction in general principle that you would lay down between the two classes of cases?—I would say that all those cases of hopeless and irrecoverable disease, or even those cases of disease which are better managed in public institutions than in private families, ought to be provided for with the utmost liberality.

Do you not conceive that all cases of misery, the relief of which has no tendency to increase the number of cases requiring relief, may be safely provided for?—I think they may be provided for with all safety.

Would not cases of insanity, and cases of loss of sight and loss of limb, come under the latter description?—Decidedly. Deaf and dumb asylums, lunatic asylums, institutions for the blind, infirmaries, and even fever hospitals might be supported to the uttermost on public funds. It is the more desirable a right direction should be given to public charity, and in particular to the charities of the rich; that, generally speaking, the upper classes have a great desire to do good if they knew but how to do it. There is one way in which *ostensible* relief, whether through the medium of an assessment or from the hands of the wealthy, might scatter on every side the elements of moral deterioration, and that is when the object is general indigence. There is another way in which public and visible charity might prove of permanent benefit to society, both for the relief of suffering and the increase of virtue among men; such as the support of institutions for the cure or alleviation of disease, and for education.

Do you not conceive that provision might be made at the public expense for all those cases of calamity which are so entirely contingent that no foresight or previous calculation could be made to prevent their occurrence, or to provide for them when they do occur?—I think that institutions ought to be provided for all those cases.

Do you see any objection to an enlarged liberal provision for the relief of the sick poor, in the way of distribution of medi-

cines and dispensaries?—I would object to any legal relief of the poor in their own houses. I would not object to dispensaries, the object of which is medicine; but all that kind of household distress which falls in the way of the ordinary experience of families, I think should be left to be provided for by the families themselves, or by private charity.—*Evidence before the Commons' Committee.*

VII. Section III. § 2.—*The Gradations and Inequalities of Humble Life.*

The delusion of blending all the grades and varieties of common people into one general object of contemplation, has misled or bewildered the public mind on two great questions. In the question of pauperism, the apprehension is, that if the supplies of the existing system were done away, there would be nothing to replace them; and, in particular, that destitute families in the deep recesses of a city population, surrounded on all hands by others about as destitute as themselves, and placed beyond the observation and effective sympathy of those who had the power to relieve them, would inevitably perish. This is a very natural fear; but it proceeds on the imagination, that every plebeian district of a town is a dead level, of equal unmixed unalleviated, want and wretchedness. It is not recollected, how much *can* be done in every little neighbourhood by an internal operation of charity; and how much *would* be done, were it not that, by the attempt of law to supplement and supersede humanity, this operation has been paralyzed. We have to record it as our experience, after the close and personal observation of years, that never did a case of distress occur in the midst of a large and congregated mass of operatives, which was not followed up by the timely outbreakings of sympathy from the contiguous families; and, therefore, as our persuasion, that were human want confided to human benevolence alone, it would experience a far more copious, as well as kindly, circulation of relief, than is poured upon it from without, by the ministrations of a legal ized charity.—*The Supreme Importance of a right Moral to a right Economical state of the Community.*

VIII. Section III. § 13.—*Importance of devolving the Temporal Ministrations of a Church on a separate order of Office-bearers.*

Conceive an individual to be associated with a district in the

joint capacity of elder and deacon; and that, at the same time, its pauperism has attained such a magnitude, and such an establishment, as to have addressed itself to the desires and the expectations of a large proportion of the families. The argument must suppose him to be equally intent on the duties of each office, without which there is a defect of right and honest principle on his part; and this of itself is a mischievous thing, though no exception whatever could be alleged against the combination of these two offices. It will, therefore, serve better to expose the evils of this combination, to figure to ourselves a man of zeal and conscientiousness, on whom the burden of both offices has been laid, and who is uprightly desirous of fulfilling the duties of both. There are many who are but elders in name, while deacons alone and deacons altogether in practice and performance; and this, of itself, by the extinction, as far as it goes, of the whole use and influence of the eldership among the people, is, of itself, a very sore calamity. But let us rather put the case of one who would like religious influence to descend from him, in the former capacity, and, at the same time, would like to acquit himself rightly among the people, in the latter capacity; and we hope to make it appear that a more ruinous plurality could not have been devised, by which to turn into poison each ingredient of which it is composed—and that it is indeed a work of extreme delicacy and difficulty for an individual, on whom duties of a character so heterogeneous have been devolved, to move through the district assigned to him, without scattering among its people the elements of moral deterioration.

He goes forth among them as an elder, when he goes forth to pray with them, or to address them on the subject of Christianity, or to recommend their attention to its ordinances, or to take cognisance of the education of their children. There are, indeed, a thousand expedients by which he may attempt a religious influence among the people; and, in plying these expedients, he acts purely as an ecclesiastical labourer. And, did he act singly in this capacity, we might know what to make of the welcome which he obtains from the families. But they recognise him to be also a dispenser of temporalities; and they have an indefinite imagination of his powers, and of his patronage, and of his funds; and their sordid or mercenary expectations are set at work by the very sight of him; and thus some paltry or interested desise of their own may lurk under the whole of that apparent cordiality which marks the intercourse of the two parties. It were a great satisfaction, to disentangle one principle here from another; and this can only be done by separating the one office from the other. It were desirable to ascertain how much of liking there is for the Christian, and how much for the pecuniary ministration with which this phi-

lanthropist is charged. The union of these two throws an impenetrable obscurity over this question, and raises a barrier against the discernment of real character, amongst the people with whom we deal.

But this combination does more than disguise the principles of the people. It serves also to deteriorate them. If there be any nascent affection among them towards that which is sacred, it is well to keep it single—to defend it from the touch of every polluting ingredient—to nourish and bring it forward on the strength of its own proper aliment—and most strenuously to beware of holding out encouragement to that most subtle of all hypocrisies, the hypocrisy of the heart; which is most surely and most effectually done, when the lessons of preparation for another world are mixed up with the bribery of certain advantages in this world, and made to descend upon a human subject in one compound administration. There is a wonderful discernment into our nature evinced by the Saviour and his Apostles, throughout their whole work of christianising, in the stress that is laid by them on singleness of eye; and in the announcements they give of the impossibility of serving two masters, and of the way in which a divided state of the affections shuts and darkens the heart against the pure influence of truth. Simplicity of desire, or the want of it, makes the whole difference between being full of light and full of darkness. It is thus that Christ refuses to be a judge and a divider; and that the Apostles totally resign the office of ministering to the temporal wants of the poor; and that Paul, in particular, is at so much pains both to teach and to exemplify, among his disciples, the habit of independence on charity to the very uttermost—denouncing the hypocrisy of those who make a gain of godliness; and even going so far as to affirm, that the man who had joined their society, with a view to his own personal relief, out of its funds, from the expense of maintaining his own household, was worse than an infidel. On the maxim that "my kingdom is not of this world," it will ever be vain to amalgamate Christianity with the desires of an earthly ambition; and this is just as applicable to the humble ambition of a poor man for a place in the lists of pauperism, as to that higher ambition which toils, and aspires, and multiplies its desires, and its doings, on the walks of a more dignified patronage. We are not pleading, at present, for the annihilation of pauperism, but for the transference of its duties to a separate class of office-bearers. We are for removing a taint and a temptation from the eldership, and for securing, in this way, the greatest possible efficacy to their Christian labours. We are for delivering the people from the play and the perplexity of two affections, which cannot work together, contemporaneously at least, in the same

bosom. On the principle that there is a time for every thing, we should like a visit from an elder to be the time when Christianity shall have a separate and unrivalled place in the attention of those with whom, for the moment, he is holding intercourse; and that when the impression of things sacred might be growing and gathering strength from his conversation, there shall not be so ready and palpable an inlet as there is at present, for the impression of things secular to stifle and overbear them.

There are two different ways in which an elder may acquit himself of his superinduced deaconship—either in the way of easy compliance with the demands of the population, or in the way of strict and conscientious inquiry, so as to act rightly by the fund which has been committed to him. Take the first way of it; and suppose him, at the same time, to have the Christianity of his district at heart, and what a bounty he carries around with him on the worst kind of dissimulation! Like a substance, where neither of the ingredients taken singly is poisonous, and which assumes all its virulence from the composition of them, what a power of insidious but most fatal corruption lies in the mere junction of these two offices! There is many a pluralist of this sort, who never can and never will verify this remark, by any experience of his own; because he has virtually resigned the better and the higher of his functions, or rather has not once from the beginning exercised them. But let him go forth upon his territory, in the discharge of both, and what a sickening duplicity of reception he is exposed to! What a mortifying indifference to the topic he has most at heart, under all the constrained appearance of attention which is rendered to it! With what dexterity can the language of sanctity be pressed into the service, when their purpose requires it; and yet how evident, how mortifyingly evident, often, is the total absence of all feeling and desire upon the subject, from the hearts of these wily politicians! How often, under such an unfortunate arrangement as this, is Christianity prostituted into a vehicle for the most sordid and unworthy applications—all its lessons no further valued than for the mean and beggarly elements with which they are conjoined, and all its ordinances no further valued than as stepping-stones, perhaps, to a pair of shoes. It is this mingling together of incompatible desires—it is this bringing of a pure moral element into contiguity with other elements which vitiate and extinguish it—is is this compounding of what is fitted in itself to raise the character, with what is fitted, in itself, and still more by its hypocritical association with better things, to adulterate and debase it—It is this which sheds a kind of withering blight over all the ministrations of the pluralist; and must convince every enlightened observer, that,

till he gets rid of the many elements of temptation which are in his hands, he will never expatiate, either with Christian comfort, or with Christian effect, among the population.

And here we may remark another argument against this plurality, which ought to address itself with great effect to all those who think that an increase of profligacy among the people is the sure attendant on an increase of pauperism. There may be no great harm done by putting this administration into the hands of an eldership, so long as the money is raised in the shape of a free-will offering from the giver, and it is made to descend in the shape of unconstrained kindness upon the receiver; or so long as they have only to deal with moderate sums among moderate expectations. But, when the fund is raised in a legal and compulsory way by assessment; and when that which wont to be petitioned for, in the shape of charity, is demanded in the shape of justice; and when the people are thus armed with the force and impetus of an aggressive legality, upon the one side, and are not met in the firm and resolute spirit of a defensive legality, upon the other—there will, in time, be amongst us a far more rapid acceleration of pauperism than ever has been exemplified in England. That old apparatus which would have sufficed under the old system, will be a feeble defence against the weight and urgency of applications that are sure to be engendered by the new. A kirk-session may do for an organ of distribution, while the expression of good-will may be held forth, on the one side, and the feeling of gratitude may be called back, on the other. But when, from an administration of charity, it is transformed into a warfare of rights, it becomes altogether an unseemly contest for such parties as these; and a contest in which the cupidity, and the love of pleasure or of indolence, that characterise our nature, will mightily prevail over that unpractised simplicity which we should ever like to characterise our eldership—whose proper business it is to officiate among sacraments, and to exert a Christian superintendance over the families that are assigned to them. The exemption of Scotland from an oppressive pauperism is not at all due to the ecclesiastical form of that machinery under which it is administered. It is to be ascribed simply to the absence of a compulsory provision; and it will be found that, after this is introduced, then, so soon as it is fully understood and acted on, all that is ecclesiastical in our courts of administration, so far from being a safeguard to the independence of our people, will, in fact, smooth and widen and encourage their transition to pauperism. Scotland has not yet had time to overtake England, in the amount of her expenditure. But it will be found, that, in the great majority of those parishes where a compulsory provision for the poor has been established, she is moving onward

at a faster rate of acceleration. The pauperism of Manchester is still greater, in its present amount, than that of Glasgow. But the proportional increase in Glasgow, during the last twenty years, is very greatly beyond that in Manchester.

Let us now conceive a pluralist to be aware of this mischief, and, by way of guarding against it, to put himself forth in an attitude more characteristic of deaconship—firm in resistance to every claim that is capable of being reduced, and most strict and resolute in all his investigations. In this case the only fit and effectual attitude of eldership must be given up. He may as well try to look two opposite ways at the same moment, as think of combining the one with the other, and of keeping the people at bay by his resistance to them, on the ground of his lower, and, at the same time, drawing their regard, on the ground of his better and higher ministrations. He will find it utterly impossible to find access for the lessons of Christianity, into hearts soured against himself, and, perhaps, thwarted in their feelings of justice, by the disappointments they have gotten at his hand. It is thus that, by a strange fatality, the man who has been invested with a religious superintendance over the people, has become the most unlikely for gaining a religious influence over them; and all his wonted powers of usefulness, now worse than neutralised, have, by the positive dislike that has been turned against him, been sunk far beneath the level of any private or ordinary individual. There cannot, surely, be a more complete travesty on all that is wise and desirable in human institutions, than to saddle that man, whose primitive office it is to woo the people to that which is spiritually good, with another office, where he has to war against the people, on the subject of their temporalities. There may, at one time, have been a compatability between these two functions, under the cheap economy of the old Scottish pauperism; but it is all put to flight by the shock which takes place between the rapacity of the one party and the resistance of the other, under a system of English pauperism. The people will listen with disdain, or with shrewd and significant contempt, to to the Christian conversation of that elder who stands confronted against them, on the ground of his deaconship: and they will expect an easy unresisting compliance with all their demands from that deacon who has plied them with the affectionate counsels of Christianity, on the ground of his eldership. They will dexterously work the desirousness that he must feel, in the one of these capacities, against the duties that he would like to fulfil in the other of them. They will tell him that they have no time and no heart for religion, while under the pressure of alleged difficulties that he will do nothing to relieve. He, in the meantime, will perceive that, unless he complies

with the demand, he can find no acceptance; and that, though he should comply, acceptance gained through the medium of bribery will lead to no pure or desirable influence on the character of the population. In this unfortunate contest, each will, in all likelihood, believe the other to be a hypocrite; the one incurring this suspicion because of the way in which the legal hardihood of the deacon stands in awkward and unseemly conjunction upon the same individual, with the apparent zeal and sincerity of the elder; and the other incurring this suspicion, because of the way in which a sordid desire after things secular is mingled, in the same exhibition, with a seeming deference to things sacred. It is thus that the pluralist feels himself paralysed into utter helplessness; and never was public functionary more cruelly hampered than by this association of duties, which are altogether so discordant. There is no place for the still small voice of Christian friendship, in such an atmosphere of recrimination, and heart-burning, and mutual jealousy, as now encompasses the ministration of charity in our great towns. To import the English principle of pauperism among the kirk-sessions of Scotland is like putting new wine into old bottles. It so mangles and lacerates an eldership, as to dissipate all the moral ascendancy they once had over our population. It is ever to be regretted that such a ministration as this should have been inserted between the two parties. No subtle or Satanic adversary of religion could have devised a more skilful barrier against all the usefulness and effect of these lay associates of the clergy: and, as the fruit of this melancholy transformation, a class of men, who have contributed so much to build up and sustain our national character, will be as good as swept away from the land.—*Christian and Economic Polity of a Nation.*

IX. Section IV. § 3. *Distinction between the Natural and Political Difficulties of the Problem of Pauperism.*

Now, that a compulsory provision for the poor has been established; and that the great unwieldy corporation of the state must be moved, ere any step can be taken towards the abolition of it; and that the subordinate courts of administration, in every parish, have sunk and settled into the obstinacy of an old practical habit, in all their proceedings—there is a host of political difficulties that must be met and overcome, not ere it can be proved with what certainty the people, when left to themselves, will find their own way to their own comfort and

independence, but ere the measure shall be carried of actually leaving the people to themselves. We think that there is no natural difficulty which stands in the way of the success of such an experiment, *if tried;* but we feel that there are many political difficulties in the way of putting the experiment to the trial. We hold it a practicable thing, to conduct any parish, either in a city or in the country, to the old economy of a Scottish parish, on the strength of an arrangement which we shall afterwards endeavour to set, in more detailed exposition, before our readers; and that there is no impediment on the parochial field, which is the real theatre of the experiment, in the way of a final and looked for success. The struggle is not with the population, for obtaining the success of the arrangement; but the struggle is with our legislature and our municipalities, for obtaining the arrangement itself. The place of most formidable resistance is not in the outer, but the inner department of this business; and the occasion of it is, when, in the hall of deliberation, the attempt is made to break up our existing artificial economy, and thus to prevail over the dislike and the prejudices of hacknied functionaries, and to carry that nearly impregnable front, wherewith all novelty is sure to be withstood, by the clerks, and the conveners, and the committeemen, of an old establishment. The battle is not with the natural difficulties of the problem, but with its political difficulties—not with the laws of human nature, as to be found in the parish where the experiment is made, but with the tendencies of human nature, as exhibited on that arena of public discussion and debate where the experiment is proposed. In the work of abolishing legalised charity, the heaviest conflict will not be with the natural poverty of the lower orders, but with that pride of argument, and that tenacity of opinion, and all those political feelings and asperities which obtain among the higher orders. In short, we hold that there is nothing in the condition of the people which opposes a barrier against the abolition of all legal and compulsory pauperism; but that there is a very strong initial barrier in the condition of our laws, and courts, and long established usages. In the practical solution of the question of public charity, the recipients will not be found so difficult of management as the lawgivers and administrators. There is a method by which might be effected, and almost without difficulty, the abolition of public charity among our plebeians—but the consent of our patricians must be obtained, ere we are free to put the method into operation: and what we affirm is, that it is a greater achievement to obtain leave and liberty for using the method, than to obtain success for the method itself; or, in other words, that the great impediment to the removal of this sore national dis-

temper, lies not among the plebeians, but among the patricians of the commonwealth.—*Christian and Economic Polity of a Nation.*

X. Section IV. § 8.—*Letter to the Lord Provost of Glasgow.*

Glasgow, August 3rd, 1819.

My Lord,—When I received the intimation of my appointment as minister of St. John's, it gave me sincere pleasure to be informed, at the same time, that a letter written by myself to Mr. Ewing was read to the magistrates and council previous to my election, as it gave me the flattering assurance that the leading objects adverted to in that letter met with the approbation of the honourable body over which your Lordship presides. In that letter I adverted to the wish I had long entertained, and which is publicly enough known by other channels, for a separate and independent management, on the part of my session, of the fund raised by collections at the church door, and with which fund I propose to take the management of all the existing sessional poor within our bounds, and so to meet the new applications for relief, as never to add to the general burden of the city by the ordinary poor of the parish of St. John's. And I here beg it to be distinctly understood, that I do not consider the revenue of the kirk-session to be at all applicable to those extraordinary cases which are produced by any sudden and unlooked-for depression in the state of our manufactures; nor, if ever there shall be a call for pecuniary aid on this particular ground, do I undertake to provide for it out of our ordinary means, but will either meet it by a parochial subscription, or by taking a full share of any such general measure as may be thought expedient under such an emergency. Your Lordship will not fail to observe, that if the new cases of ordinary pauperism accumulate upon us in the rate at which they have done formerly, they would soon overtake our present collections. And yet my confidence in a successful result is not at all founded on the expected magnitude of my future collections, but upon the care and attention with which the distribution of the fund will be conducted; a care and an attention which I despair of ever being able to stimulate effectually till I obtain an arrangement by which my session shall be left to square its own separate expenditure by its own separate and peculiar resources. At the same time, I can also, with such an arrangement, stimulate more effectually than before the liberality of my congregation; and with this twofold advantage, I am hopeful not merely of being able to overtake

the whole pauperism of St. John's, but of leaving a large surplus applicable to other objects connected with the best interests of the population in that district of the city. What I propose to do with the surplus is, to apply it as we are able to the erection and endowment of parochial schools, for the purpose of meeting our people, not with gratuitous education, but with good education on the same terms at which it is had in country parishes. My reason for troubling your Lordship with this intimation is, that I require the sanction of the heritors of the parish ere I can allocate any part of the sum raised by collections in this way. Without this sanction, I shall make no attempt to stimulate the liberality of my congregation beyond what is barely necessary for the expenses of pauperism; with this sanction I shall have the best of all arguments by which to stimulate the liberality of my hearers, and the care of my distributors, and (most important of all) the zealous co-operation even of the poorest among my people, who will easily be persuaded to observe a moderation in their demands, when they find it stands associated with a cause so generally dear to them as the education of their families. There is another object which I shall not press immediately, but which your Lordship will perceive to be as necessary for the protection of the other parishes of Glasgow as of my own, and that is, that the law of residence shall take effect between my parish and the other parishes of the city; I am quite willing that every other parish shall have protection by this law from the ingress of my poor, in return for the protection of my parish from the ingress of theirs. It is practically the simplest of all things to put this into operation from the very outset; but I mention it now chiefly with a view to be enabled to remind your Lordship, when it comes to be applied for afterwards, that it is not because of any unlooked-for embarrassment that I make the application, but in pursuance of a right and necessary object which even now I have in full contemplation. I shall only conclude with assuring your Lordship, that nothing will give me greater pleasure than to transmit from time to time the state of our progress in the parish of St. John's respecting all the objects alluded to in this communication; and that I hold myself subject to the same inspection and control from you, as the heritors of my parish, which the law assigns to the heritors of other parishes. A deed of consent and approbation relative to the various points that have now been submitted through your Lordship to the magistrates and council, will very much oblige,

My Lord, your Lordship's most obliged and obedient servant,

THOMAS CHALMERS.

—*Evidence before the Commons' Committee.*

XI. Section IV. § 10.—*Directory of procedure for the Deacons of St. John's.*

When one applies for admittance, through his deacon, upon our funds, the first thing to be inquired into is, if there be any kind of work that he can yet do, so as either to keep him altogether off, or, as to make a partial allowance serve for his necessities. The second, what his relations and friends are willing to do for them. The third, whether he is a hearer in any dissenting place of worship, and whether its Session will contribute to his relief. And, if, after these previous inquiries, it be found, that further relief is necessary, then there must be a strict ascertainment of his term of residence in Glasgow, and whether he be yet on the funds of the Town Hospital, or is obtaining relief from any other parish.

If, upon all these points being ascertained, the deacon of the proportion where he resides, still conceives him an object for our assistance, he will inquire whether a small temporary aid will meet the occasion, and state this to the first ordinary meeting. But, if instead of this, he conceives him a fit subject for a regular allowance, he will receive the assistance of another deacon to complete and confirm his inquiries, by the next ordinary meeting thereafter,—at which time, the applicant, if they still think him a fit object, is brought before us, and received upon the fund at such a rate of allowance as, upon all the circumstances of the case, the meeting of deacons shall judge proper.—*Present State and Future Prospects of Pauperism in Glasgow.*

XII. Section IV. § 12.—*Utopianism of Practical Men.*

There is a stubborn incredulity, which, however widely it may appear to differ, is, in some respects, very much at one with sanguine Utopianism. It is true, that the same magnificence which captivates the latter, is that which is regarded by the former with derision and distrust. So that while the one is easily lured to a chimerical enterprise, and just because the object of it is great, it is this very greatness which freezes the other into hopeless and impracticable apathy. Yet both agree, in that they take a direct and instantaneous impression from the object itself, and are alike heedless of the immediate means by which it may be accomplished. It is thus, that the splendid visionary is precipitated from his aerial flight, because he over-

looked the utter pathlessness of that space, which lay between him and the impossibility that he aspired after. But it is also thus, that the fixed and obstinate practitioner refuses to move one single footstep, because he equally overlooks that continuous way, which leads through the intervening distance, to some great yet practicable achievement. But give him time—and the mere length of a journey ought not to repel the traveller from his undertaking—nor will he resign the advantage for which he looks at its further extremity, till you have demonstrated that one or more of its stages is utterly impassable. In other words, there is a blind infidelity, as well as a blinded imagination—and it is difficult to say whether the cause of philanthropy has suffered more from the temerity of projectors, or from the phlegmatic inertness of men, who, unable to discriminate between the experimental and the vissionary, are alike determined to despise all and to resist all.—*Christian and Economic Polity of a Nation.*

XIII. Section IV. § 15.—*One Example (referring for others to the work specified in page* 112*) of the Parochial Management of St. John's.*

4. A mother and daughter, the sole occupiers of a single apartment, were both afflicted with cancer, for which the one had to undergo an operation, while the other was so far gone as to be irrecoverable. A case so impressive as this, required only to be known that it might be met and provided for; and on the first warning of its necessity, a subscription could easily be raised, out of the unforced liberalities of those, who have been attracted from a distance, by the mere report of the circumstance having made its natural progress to their ears. And what then is it that suspends the necessity of such a measure?—the exuberant, and as yet untired kindness of those who are near, and whose willing contributions both of food, and of service, and of cordials, have lighted up a moral sunshine in this habitation of distress? Were it right that any legal charity, whatever, should arrest a process so beautiful? Were it even right that the interference of the wealthier at a distance, should lay a freezing interdict on the play of those lesser streams, which circulate around the abode of penury and pain? We want not to exonerate the rich from their full share in the burden of this world's philanthropy. But it is delightful to think that while, with their mightier gifts, an educational apparatus could be reared for good Christian tuition to the people, and good scholarship to their families, and so a barrier be set up against the profligacy of cities—there is meanwhile a spirit and

a capability among the poor wherewith it is easy to ward off the scarcely inferior mischief of a corrupt and degrading pauperism.—*Appendix to Speech delivered before the General Assembly of* 1822.

XIV. Section IV. § 17.—*Three Testimonies (of the Twenty-two printed at the place referred to in page* 113*) from the Deacons of St. John's, each deponing to the perfect facility of his management.*

These Testimonies were given in the form of Replies to the following Circular :—

Glasgow, August 11th, 1823.

Dear Sir,

You will oblige me much by your earliest possible reply to the following Queries :—

1. Of what Proportion is it in St. John's Parish that you are Deacon?

2. What is its population, as nearly as you can infer, from your latest survey?

3. How many Paupers belong to it that are upon the Deacon's Fund?

4. How many applications may you have for Parochial Relief, monthly or quarterly, as near as you can remember?

5. What time may the business of attending to these applications, and the necessary inquiries that you had to make in consequence of them, have cost you upon the whole?

6. Are the applications more or less frequent since you entered upon your office?

7. Could you state how much time you are required to sacrifice, per week, or per month, in making the requisite investigations that you are actually called to?

8. Do you think, that a man in ordinary business would find the task of meeting the pauperism of such a district as yours, so laborious as to put him to any sensible inconvenience?

9. Will you have the goodness to state any circumstances connected with your management, that you think might elucidate the nature of the duties or attentions that you have had to discharge?

I am, dear Sir, yours most gratefully,

Thomas Chalmers.

1. " The latest survey was taken about a month ago, and from it I observe, that this proportion contains 335 inhabitants.

"There is not at present a single pauper in this proportion upon the Deacon's Fund; nor has there occurred either an occasional or permanent case, requiring assistance from this fund, since I received the charge of it in the month of May, 1822

"The number of applications for relief in this proportion has been very few during the last twelve months, not amounting, to the best of my recollection, to more than seven, or about an average, one every two months.

"Upon a review of these cases, I compute that I may have bestowed upon them about sixteen hours in whole, or about a quarter per week, at the utmost.

"All those applications for relief to which I have alluded, occurred during the first six months after accepting office; which leaves nine months during which I have not had a single application for parish relief.

"Before I could be prevailed upon to take charge of this proportion, I imagined that, in consequence of my professional avocations, it would be quite impossible for me to accomplish such an object; but I was very much astonished to find, after a few months' trial, how simple a matter it was, and how easily managed; indeed so light and pleasant did the duty seem, that I thought, if all the other proportions were equally manageable, I could take upon me to manage the whole parish, and attend to my business besides.

"I am of opinion that the first thing necessary to the proper discharge of the office which I hold, is to get immediately acquainted with every *house* and *family* in the proportion; in order to check any imposition which may otherwise be practised, and also to facilitate the investigation of every case which may occur.

"Of those cases which I have above alluded to, *three* were of *runaway husbands*. The first was left with two children, both under three years of age, the youngest at the breast. The second case was left with *four daughters*, under ten years of age, and the youngest at the breast. The third was left about three years before she applied to me, with two children under ten years of age, and an adopted child, for the support of which she had nothing, the father and mother having died some time before.

"All these cases appear at first sight formidable, and seemingly fit for the exercise of unbounded charity, both public and private; but with the exception of the second case, (which by the by, was one of a very interesting nature) none of them received, nor did they require the hand of ill-timed charity to assist them. It would occupy too much of your valuable time, however, to enter upon the particulars of any of the cases, or

explain how *they were treated;* but let it suffice to add, that had liberal means been afforded in those cases to supply their apparent wants, their husbands would never have been found out, and they and their children would have been at this moment in more abject poverty than at their first application.

"I am sorry that I should have taken up so much of your time, in reading over this long answer to your important queries; but I thought it incumbent on me to say so much, in defence of a system, the advantages resulting from which, both to the moral and religious character of a people, I have had now so ample an opportunity of judging."

The testimony here respecting the runaway husbands, is peculiarly important, and marks the close connexion that obtains between the abolition of pauperism, and the virtue of families.

5. "In reply to your queries, I beg to state, that I have charge of the poor of a proportion in St. John's parish, whose population amounts to 314, according to a very recent survey.

"There is only one regular pauper, an orphan boy, and two who get occasional assistance.

"I should imagine the applications for even occasional aid, do not exceed one monthly.

"I have spent a good deal of time in the proportion, but think an hour every week would be sufficient to investigate into the state of the poor.

"Applications for relief are less frequent, because work has latterly been much more abundant.

"From what I know of the mode of conducting business in Glasgow, I think any man might, without sensible inconvenience, if he have the inclination, attend to the pauperism of such a proportion as mine, provided his dwelling-house be not very remote from the proportion of which he has charge.

"It appears to me, if a deacon simply confine his charge of a district to granting an allowance to those who have a legal claim to relief, his labour will be very small indeed; but if he take an interest in procuring work for those who find a difficulty in getting it—if he endeavour to get the parents to send their children to school—if he give occasional assistance to those who require it from sickness—he will find a good deal of employment, and require to exercise some discretion not to do harm where he wishes to confer a benefit.

"The most unpleasant thing to be met with, as far as I have seen, are people who profess to be religious, but who, either from want of principle or industry become a burden, either as direct paupers, or, what is worse, borrowers of money, which they can never repay.

"P. S.—You are aware the population of this proportion

consists of very poor people; there is only one family above the rank of operatives."

The district to which the above testimony relates is about the poorest in Glasgow. I offer the following very important notice in regard to this district, from a former deacon who had the charge of it, but was obliged to quit it upon leaving town:—

"Though foreign to our subject, I may state that I have received £2 2s. out of the proportion, to assist an outfit of emigrants to Quebec; and £5 or £6 from among the very poorest of them for Bible and Missionary Societies. These sums tend to prove that any of our proportions might be supported from its own resources."

18. "In reply to the queries contained in your circular, I have to state, that my proportion in St. John's parish contains a population, by the last survey of June, 1823, of 300.

"There is only one case of pauperism connected with the proportion at present—it is of three years and a half standing.

"I have had only four regular cases altogether. The whole population of my district are operatives, or labourers, many of them Irish. In November 1819, when I was appointed deacon, the greater part of them were in absolute starvation from want of work. I had consequently many applications for about five months, which were greatly increased by the distribution at Hutchesons' Hospital. During that period, I supplied with various relief about one-third of the families under my charge, not one of which would have been called forth in ordinary times.

"As I was an entire stranger to the duties of my office, as well as the people committed to my charge, it required a great sacrifice of my time at first, often three or four hours in a day; but that pressure has long passed away, and I now reap the benefit of it in a pretty thorough knowledge of almost every family in the district.

"I have brought no case under investigation for ten months. I had indeed two applications within that time, but after a little conversation, they both voluntarily withdrew.

"Taking the survey, may occupy three or four hours per annum. The deacons' meetings and investigations connected therewith, two or three hours a month, but I have had no call on my time from the pauperism of my own district, for many months, except signing a few papers exempting from the Cottage Tax.

"With a little experience, I see nothing to prevent a person in ordinary business, to manage such a district as mine without inconvenience.

"I consider it most important for a deacon to be intimately acquainted with every family under his charge, and there is no

way he can acquire that knowledge so well, as by frequent visitation; besides, the very frequency of his visits gives him a stronger interest in their *well-doing*, not to mention the reciprocal feeling it creates towards himself, while he is furnished with a store of useful information for every emergency.

"I have not been able to persevere in visiting regularly, but it is not from the fear that my presence would increase the applications for parish aid. I think, were we required to give our pastor monthly a written report, it might be of great benefit to ourselves. It ought to be a deacon's aim to behave with as much kindness as possible, to listen patiently to every application, do his utmost to procure work when it was wanted, and, what is perhaps more difficult, to resist, with sturdy firmness, every improper claim, in spite of abuse, or popular clamour."

I have here to express my acknowledgments for the information that I have received from such monthly reports of their districts, as the gentlemen connected with them were pleased to furnish, and, more particularly, to the author of the last communication. The truth is, that this practice languished, but from what cause?—purely from the want of materials. The people when conducted to a natural state, at length, offer nothing to call forth the observation of those, whose ostensible office it is to manage the affairs of their pauperism. "They sheathe the sword for lack of argument." Their attentions are finally superseded—a circumstance which might, at length, attach an insipidity, and even an unimportance to their office, but which, in itself, affords the strongest verification of the truth of our principles.—*Statement in regard to the Pauperism of Glasgow, from the Experience of the last eight years.*

XV. Section IV. § 18.—*Rationale of the Success attending the St. John's Experiment.*

I should like on this subject to repeat an illustration that I have often employed in argument, which, though rather homely, is, I think, an effective one. I have sometimes imagined a diseased excrescence upon a man's face connected with his habit of drinking port wine, and that he had been under a council of physicians for years, who had managed in a variety of ways, but that the disease only got worse: suppose another physician discovers the real connexion between the excrescence and its cause, he has, perhaps, infinite trouble and pains in the work of breaking up the old council of physicians, and at length gets alongside of his patient, after which he has nothing to do but to lay a firm interdict on the further use of port wine, after

which the excrescence subsides, not by any further care or strenuousness on his part, but in virtue of the *vis medicatrix* in the body natural. Now, that was precisely my experience in the parish of St. John's; it was under a very complex management, and the whole of my difficulties were of an artificial and political sort. The difficulty was not to make our system succeed, but to get the system established at all, after which it stood as a barrier between the disease and that which I hold to be the aliment of the disease, the compulsory fund, when by the pure *vis medicatrix* of the body politic, the pauperism subsided of itself. We were complimented for our strenuousness and skill; but we all along felt it to be quite undeserved, assured as we were, that under the same system the same effects would follow all the world over.—*Evidence before the Commons' Committee.*

XVI. Section IV. § 21.—*Laudable efforts of the Common People, when their self-respect is not unduly tampered with.*

If the people have sunk in moral or religious worth, under a treatment the necessary effect of which was to degrade them, let us not utter one sentence of disrespect, till we first try the effect of a treatment, the natural effect of which is to raise and to transform them. We could not, without this preliminary remark, have adverted to the outset of one of these Saltmarket schools, or looked back on the first raw exhibition of the children, or revealed thus publicly what they once were, if we had not been enabled further to relate what, under the energetic superintendence of one of the teachers, they have actually become. Certain it is, that we never witnessed so rapid a cultivation; and when, on visiting the school a few months after its establishment, we beheld the dress and decency of their exterior, and marked the general propriety of their manners, and observed the feeling that was evident in the replies of some, and the talent and promptitude that shone forth in the replies of many—when, along with all this, we were made to rejoice in the greetings of the assembled parentage, and shared their triumph and satisfaction in the proficiency of their own offspring, whom, poor as they were, they, out of their own unaided resources, had so respectably arrayed—when we further reflected, that the living scene before us, was not made up of the scantlings of a whole city, but was formed by the compact population of one small but thoroughly explored vicinage,—With our eyes open to what had thus been done by the moral force of

care and kindness on the part of one individual, we could not miss the inference, that, with a right distribution, it was in the power of a number of individuals, to throw another aspect over the habit and character of another generation.—*Christian and Economic Polity of a Nation.*

XVII. Section IV. § 26.—*Testimony of Dr. M'Farlan.*

April 20th, 1830.

My dear Sir,—You cannot be more fully satisfied of the excellence of the St. John's system of pauperism than I am, nor can I imagine how any man who approves of our country parish system can object to it, for it has always appeared to me to be neither more nor less than the Scottish country parish system applied by means of a peculiar agency or machinery to our city parishes. I hope to be able, at no distant period, to show, that if there is in our large towns a greater number of poor, there is also a much greater amount of wealth to supply the wants of the poor, and no want of a disposition to apply it to that purpose. The St. John's system appears to me to create the link which connects the rich and the beneficent with the poor, it being the office of the deacons not only to prevent imposture by their rigid examination of all the cases which come before them, but also to bring the real and deserving poor under the eye of those who may have it in their power to provide work for their children, or to contribute otherwise to their relief. As the friend of the poor, I am an advocate for the system; I am convinced that if it universally prevailed in our large towns, it would greatly alleviate much of the misery which now exists, and, by creating and strengthening habits of industry and economy, would promote materially the moral improvement, and consequently the happiness of the poor.

The experience of the sixteen months during which I was minister of St. John's confirmed the favourable opinion which I previously entertained of the system; it worked well in all respects; with an income from collections not much exceeding £300 we kept down the pauperism of a parish containing a population of 10,000, and I know from actual observation that the poor were in better condition, and excepting the worthless and profligate who applied, and were refused assistance, were more contented and happy than the poor in the other parishes of Glasgow; I was also agreeably disappointed at finding that Dr. Chalmers was not the only person having sufficient influence to obtain the aid of the respectable members of his congregation in administering the affairs of the poor. I had not the smallest

difficulty in procuring a sufficient number of deacons for that purpose.

You are aware, that in the month of November, 1825, I was appointed to another parish in this city, at that time under the old system; and although that system was better administered in St. Enoch's parish than it was perhaps in any other in similar circumstances, I could not fail to perceive its defects; and, therefore, with the concurrence of the kirk-session, a system in all essential points similar to that of St. John's has been established. It has now been in operation for eight or nine months, and has hitherto succeeded to my utmost wishes. The assessment is the only thing that stands in my way; it chills both public and private charity; many of the wealthy members of my congregation do not hesitate to assign it as an apology for contributing sparingly to our church-door collections; and I fear that it has a pernicious influence on their habits of private charity; notwithstanding, we are confident of success.

Wishing all success to those who would ward of from the *poor* of Ireland the dreadful influence of poor rates,

I am, My dear Sir, yours always sincerely,

PATRICK M'FARLANE.

XVIII. SECTION IV. § 27.—*Discouragements under which the St. John's System laboured, and in virtue of which its discontinuance was anticipated as far back as* 1830.

I have to state that we are under very peculiar disadvantages in these parishes, St. Enoch's and St. John's; because it has a paralyzing influence on the liberalities of the wealthy to our poor, that those wealthy are also brought in to support the expenditure of the general system in Glasgow, and it is extremely discouraging, that though we have cleared away the burden of a compulsory provision from the parish of St. John's, yet the householders and the proprietors in that parish are just as much subject as before to assessment for the general expenses of the poor in the city.

I think it right to say, in regard to the present state of St. John's, as justifying a reliance upon the result of our experiment, that there is in one respect a very great precariousness; for let two or three only of the agents relax their management by a very little, such is the inherent power of increase in all systems of public charity which are carelessly conducted, that it would be in the power even of these few to overset the experiment. The true doctrinal inference which may be drawn out

of the past history of St. John's ought not to be affected by any thing future in the history of that parish, particularly when one adverts to the very great discouragements by which the parish is surrounded, as well as the great mischief which it is in the power even of a small fraction of the agency to bring upon the parish, by letting down the strictness of their administration. The discouragements are great indeed: the establishment of a new system always makes slow progress amongst practical men, insomuch that I have found it far easier practically to do the thing, than to convince men that the thing is practicable. There is a considerable feeling of hostility to this gratuitous method of relieving the poor.—*Evidence before the Commons' Committee.*

XIX. Section IV. § 28.—*Extracts from Mr. Tuffnel's Report.*

This system has been attended with the most triumphant success for thirteen years; it is now in perfect operation, and not a doubt is expressed by its managers of its continuing to remain so. The poor which St. John's had in the hospital have diminished by deaths to four, and even the expense of maintaining these is paid for by the parish out of its collections, consequently it has to undergo the hardship of being assessed for the support of the poor, without receiving a farthing's benefit from the money so raised, as not a single pauper belonging to it is maintained by the assessment.

The chief virtue of the new system seems to consist in the closer investigation which each new case of pauperism receives, by which means the parish is prevented from being imposed on; and as it is well known by the poor that this severe scrutiny is never omitted, attempts at imposition are less frequently practised. The laxity of the old management and utility of this investigation may be exemplified by what occurred when it was first put in practice. As all the St. John's sessional poor were closely examined, it was thought unfair not to bring their out-door Hospital poor, which the old system had left, to the same scrutiny; when it was discovered that many persons were receiving relief who had no claim to it, and who were consequently instantly struck off the roll; one man was found in the receipt of a weekly allowance who had eight workmen under him. It may safely be averred, that under the present management such an instance could not possibly occur. It is right, however, to mention, that in the other Glasgow parishes a much closer attention is bestowed on each case of pauperism than formerly.

In spite, however, of this success, the lovers of the old system still oppose the new as keenly as ever; and there seems to be as much difference of opinion in Glasgow at present respecting its merits as when it was first established. Amidst these conflicting statements it would be presumptuous in a stranger to give an opinion except so far as it is drawn from facts, and these it seems are all in favour of it.

When this system was begun, it was declared by its opponents that it could not last, but it has lasted for thirteen years: that it could only exist under Dr Chalmers, but it has existed equally well under his two successors, Dr. M'Farlan and Dr. Brown: that in no other church so large offerings could be collected, as an undue proportion of rich attended St. John's church. This, I am assured by the residents is incorrect, and that the congregation is not richer than an average one. During Dr. Chalmers's incumbency, the large amount of the collections was doubtless partly owing to his popularity, as they have since declined on the average; but by an inspection of the fifth column of the table, it will be seen that they at present far exceed what is given in any other parish. This, I have little doubt, is owing to the knowledge, which the church-goers have, that the sole dependence of the poor is on the collections. This is the case so uniformly in every parish I have visited, that it might be known, whether the poor of any place in Scotland were supported by assessment, simply by an inspection of the amount of offerings at the church door.

It has been said, that since the parishes of Glasgow are not protected against each other's poor by the law of settlement, the small number of the St. John's paupers is owing to their poor being mostly driven out of the parish by the harsh treatment they might receive. Before this system was commenced, so confident was the founder of it that the reverse would take place, that the poor would prefer instead of avoiding his parish on account of the different mode of treating them, that he actually stipulated, in a letter to one of the magistrates published at the time, that the law of settlement should take effect between his parish and the other parishes; in other words, that he should be protected from the influx of paupers from other parishes, which in return were to be similarly protected against his own. And so correct were his anticipations (the stipulation not having been agreed to), that in the first three years o. the existence of the reformed plan, twice as many paupers came in as went out; and one of the managers assures me, that a constant preference seems given by the poor to St. John's above other parishes, on account of the different way of treating them; at any rate there is no disinclination to dwell in it.

The essence of the St. John's management consists in the

superior system of inspection which it establishes; this is brought about by causing the applicants for aid to address themselves, in the first instance, to persons of station and character, whose sole parochial duty consists in examining into their condition, and who are always ready personally to pay a kind attention to their complaints.

This personal attention of the rich to the poor seems to be one of the most efficient modes of preventing pauperism. It is a subject of perpetual complaint that the poor do not receive the charities of the rich with gratitude. The reason of this appears to be, that the donation of a few shillings from a rich man to a poor one is no subtraction from the giver's comforts, and consequently is no proof of his interest in the other's welfare: it seems natural and reasonable that there should be some proportion preserved between the gratitude felt for a favour conferred, and the difficulty or inconvenience that the doer of it is put to in conferring it. If the rich give their time to the poor instead of their money, they part with a commodity which the poor see is valuable to the givers, and consequently esteem the attention the more, as it implies an interest in their prosperity; and a feeling seems to be engendered in their minds of unwillingness to press on the kindness of those who thus prove themselves ready to sympathise with them in distress, and to do their utmost to relieve it. This feeling acts as a spur to the exertions of the poor; their efforts to depend on their own resources are greater; and consequently the chance of their becoming dependent on the bounty of others less.

In St. John's parish this personal attendance on the poor is carried to the greatest possible extent; every application for assistance is sure to be met with patient attention, as far removed as possible from magisterial haughtiness, and instead of the continued bickerings between the overseer and the objects of relief, which frequently characterise the administration of an English parish, a friendly intercourse between rich and poor ensures to the latter a ready relief and a just appreciation of their distresses, to the former, that their bounty will not be abused, or their attentions be undervalued or unacknowledged. —*Appendix to Christian and Economic Polity of a Nation.*

XX. Section IV. § 33.—*Summary Reflection on the Experience of St. John's.*

The managers of the poor for the parish of St. John's are in the best possible circumstances for observation on these points. Some of them will recollect the state of matters anterior to

1819; and they will not have forgotten their experience during the currency of the undertaking from 1819 to 1837. But, last of all, they have now entered on the reverse experience o the old system again in operation; and they can tell what the blessings are which have flowed in its train—or whether in their consciences they can say, that they witness any amelioration therefrom in the peace and contentment of the parish, or in the substantial well-being of its families. For ourselves we cannot but look on the period from 1819 to 1837, as a precious interval of light; and though the lesson then given forth was unheeded at the time, and is now withdrawn from the observation of men refusing to be schooled by it—yet the truth it told is stable and everlasting, at least as abiding as is the constitution of humanity, or as are the laws of that nature which God hath given to us. It remains an article in our creed, proclaimed to successive students, for guidance in their future parishes—that for the relief of general indigence, the charity of law ought in every instance to be displaced, to make room for the charity of principle and of spontaneous kindness.—*Reflections of* 1839 *on the Eperience of Pauperism in Glasgow.*

XXI. Section IV. § 39.—*Process of Extrication from the Compulsory System for the Assessed Parishes of Scotland.*

The retracing process, in such a case, is very obvious. Let the Kirk-Session be vested with the sole management of the gratuitous fund, in which it will be the wisdom of the Heritors not to interfere with them. Let all the existing cases of pauperism, at the outset of the proposed reformation, be laid upon the compulsory fund, and seen out without any difference in their relation, or in the rate of their allowance, from what would have obtained under the old system. Let the Session undertake the new cases alone, with the money raised from the free-will offerings at the church doors, which offerings they may stimulate or not as they shall see cause. Let them give their heart and their energy to the enterprise, and a very few years will find the parish totally relieved of assessments, by the dying away of the old pauperism; and the revenue of the Session, as drawn from purely Scottish sources, will be quite competent to the expenses of the new pauperism.—*Christian and Economic Polity of a Nation.*

XXII. Section V. § 5.—*Replacement of the Artificial by the Natural Charity.*

1. The first case that occurs to us, is that of a weaver, who, though he had sixpence a-day as a pension, was certainly put into circumstances of difficulty, when two winters ago, in a season of great depression, the typhus fever made its deadly inroads upon his household. His distress was, in the highest degree, striking and noticeable: and it may, therefore, look strange that no sessional movement was made towards the relief of so afflicted a family. Our confidence was in the sympathies and kind offices of the immediate neighbourhood; and we felt quite assured that any interference of ours might have checked or superseded these to such a degree, as would have intercepted more of aid, than is ever granted by the most liberal and wealthiest of all our public institutions. An outcry, however, was raised against us—and we felt compelled, for our own vindication, to investigate as far as we could, the amount of supplies that had been rendered, and actually found that it exceeded, at least, ten times the whole sum that would have been allowed, in the given circumstances, out of the fund raised by assessment. It reconciled us the more to our new system, when given to understand, that the most liberal of all the benefactions was called forth by the simple information, that nothing had been done by any of the legal or parochial charities—nor did we meet with any thing more instructive in the course of these inquiries, than the obvious feeling of each contributor, that all he had given was so very insignificant. And it is just so, that the power of individual benevolence is greatly underrated. Each is aware how incommensurate his own offering is to the necessity in question, and would, therefore, desiderate or demand a public administration of relief, else it is feared that nothing adequate has been done. He never thinks of that arithmetic by which it can be computed, that all the private offerings of himself and others, far outweigh that relief which, had it issued from the exchequer of a session or an almshouse, would have arrested those numerous rills of beneficence that are sure to flow in, upon every case of visible destitution or distress, from the surrounding vicinity.—*Appendix to Speech delivered before the General Assembly of* 1822.

XXIII. Section VII. § 7.—*Wisdom and Safety of Public Charities for the Relief of Disease; and their distinction in this respect from a Public Charity for the Relief of Indigence.*

There is a class of necessities in the relief of which public charity is not at all deleterious, and which she might safely be left to single out and to support, both as liberally and as ostensibly as she may. We allude to all those varieties, whether of mental or of bodily disease, for which it is a wise and salutary thing to rear a public institution. We hold it neither wise nor salutary to have any such asylum for the impotency that springeth from age; for this is not an unforeseen exigency, but one, that, in the vast majority of instances, could have been provided for by the care of the individual. And neither is it an exigency that is destitute of all resource in the claims and obligations of nature, for what more express, or more clearly imperative, than the duty of children? A systematic provision for age in any land, is tantamount to a systematic hostility against its virtues, both of prudence and of natural piety. But there are other infirmities and other visitations, to which our nature is liable, and a provision for which stands clearly apart from all that is exceptionable. We refer not to those current household diseases, which are incidental, on the average, to every family, but to those more special inflictions of distress, by which in one or more of its members, a family is sometimes set apart and signalized. A child who is blind, or speechless, or sunk in helpless idiotism, puts into this condition, the family to which it belongs. No mischief whatever can accrue from every such case being fully met and provided for—and it were the best vindication of a Kirk-Session, for the spareness of its allowances, on all those occasions where the idle might work, or kinsfolk might interpose, that it gives succour to the uttermost of its means, in all those fatalities of nature, which no prudence could avert, and which being not chargeable as a fault, ought neither to be chargeable as an expense, on any poor and struggling family.

It may be at once seen, wherein lies the distinction between the necessities of signal and irremediable disease, and those merely of general indigence. A provision, however conspicuous, for the former, will not add one instance of distress more to the already existing catalogue. A provision for the latter, if regular and proclaimed, will furthermore be counted on—and so be sure to multiply its own objects, to create, in fact, more of general want than it supplies. To qualify for the first kind of

relief, one must be blind, or deaf, or lunatic, or maimed, which no man is wilfully—so that this walk of charity can be overtaken, and without any corrupt influence on those who are sustained by it. To qualify for the second kind of relief, one has only to be poor, which many become wilfully, and always too in numbers which exceed the promise and the power of public charity to uphold them—so that this walk can not only never be overtaken, but, by every step of advancement upon it, it stretches forth to a more hopeless distance than before, and is also more crowded with the thriftless, and the beggarly, and the immoral. The former cases are put into our hand by nature in a certain definite amount—and she has farther, established in the human constitution such a recoil from pain, or from the extinction of any of the senses, as to form a sure guarantee against the multiplication of them. The latter cases are put into our hands by man, and his native love of indolence or dissipation becomes a spontaneous and most productive fountain of poverty, in every land where public charity has interposed to disarm it of its terrors. It is thus, that while pauperism has most egregiously failed to provide an asylum, in which to harbour all the indigence of a country, there is no such impossibility in the attempt to harbour derangement, or special impotency and disease. The one enterprise must ever fall short of its design, and, at the same time, carry a moral deterioration in its train. The other may fulfil its design to the uttermost, and without the alloy of a single evil that either patriot or economist can fear.

The doings of our Saviour in the world, after he entered on his career as a minister, had in them much of the eclat of public charity. Had he put his miraculous power of feeding into full operation, it would have thrown the people loose from all regular habits, and spread riot and disorder over the face of the land. But there was no such drawback to his miraculous power of healing. And we think it both marks the profoundness of his wisdom, and might serve to guide the institutions and the schemes of philanthropy, that while we read of but two occasions on which he multiplied loaves for a people who had been overtaken with hunger, and one on which he refused the miracle to a people who crowded about him for the purpose of being fed, he laid no limitation whatever on his supernatural faculties, when they followed him for the purpose of being cured. But it is recorded of him again and again, that when the halt, and the withered, and the blind, and the impotent, and those afflicted with divers diseases, were brought unto him, he looked to them, and he had compassion on them, and he healed them all.

This then is one safe and salutary absorbent for the revenue

of a Kirk-Session. The dumb and the blind, and the insane of a parish, may be freely alimented therewith, to the great relief of those few families who have thus been specially afflicted. Such a destination of the fund could excite no beggarly spirit in other families, which, wanting the peculiar claim, would feel that they had no part or interest in the peculiar compassion. There is vast comfort in every walk of philanthropy, where a distinct and definite good is to be accomplished, and whereof, at a certain given expense, we are sure to reach the consummation. Now, this is a comfort attendant on that separate direction of the poor's money which we have now recommended—but the main advantage that we should count upon, is its wholesome effect on the general administration and state of pauperism. The more systematically and ostensibly that the parochial managers proceeded on the distinction between special impotency and general indigence, the more, at length, would the applicants on the latter plea, give way to the applicants on the former. The manifest superiority of the first claim to the second, would go at once to the hearts of the people; and mere indigence would be taught, that in the moderation of her demands, there was a high service of humanity rendered to still more abject helplessness than her own. The Sabbath offering might gradually come to be regarded as a sort of consecrated treasure, set apart for those whom Providence had set apart from the rest of the species. Nor would indigence suffer from this rejection of her claims by public charity. She would only be thrown back on the better resources that await her in the amenities and kindnesses of private life. And it is thus that a great positive good might be rendered out of the parochial administration, to one class of sufferers, while both the delicacies of the general poor, and the sympathies of that individual benevolence on which all their wants might safely be devolved, would be fully upholden.—*Christian and Economic Polity of a Nation.*

There are many distresses incidental to humanity, the inflictions of necessity and nature, which cannot be too openly or too liberally provided for. There is all the difference that can be imagined, in point both of principle and effect, between an institution for the relief of want, and an institution for the relief of disease. The one multiplies its objects. Not so the other. The one enlists the human will on its side. The other will ever remain the object of painful reluctance and revolt to all the feelings of our sentient nature. Open a door of admission for the indigent, and we shall behold a crowd of applicants increasing every year, because lured thitherward by the inviting path of indolence or dissipation. Open a door for the admission of the diseased, and we shall only have a definite

number of applicants. Men will become voluntarily poor, but they will not become voluntarily blind or deaf or maimed or lunatic. It is thus, that while an asylum for want creates more objects than it can satisfy; an asylum for disease creates none, but may meet all and satisfy all. Public charity has been profuse where it ought not, and it has also been niggardly where it ought not. It is a disgrace to our philanthropic age, if infirmaries, or dispensaries, or asylums, whether for the cure of mental and bodily disease, or for the keeping of that which is incurable, are left to languish from want of support, or compelled to stop short, ere the necessity for which they were instituted has been fully and finally overtaken.—*Political Economy.*

XXIV. Section VIII. § 4.—*The practice of Malthusianism long anterior to the promulgation of its philosophy.*

If we revert to the habit of the last generation in Scotland, which is still fresh in the remembrance of many who are now alive, we shall find an ample verification of all these remarks. At that time, Malthus had not written, and his speculation had little more than an embryo existence in the pages of Wallace; and, certain it is, that, in the minds of our solid and regular and well-doing peasantry, it had no existence at all. It was acted upon, but without being at all counted upon. It was one of the cherished and domestic decencies of a former age, transmitted from every matron to her daughters, not to marry without a costly and creditable provision; and the delay of years, was often incurred, in the mighty work of piling together, the whole *materiel* of a most bulky and laborious preparation; and the elements of future comfort and future respectability, behoved to be accumulated to a very large extent, ere it was lawful, or at least reputable, to enter upon the condition of matrimony—and thus the moral preventive check of our great economist, was in full and wholesome operation, long before it was offered by him to public notice, in the shape of a distinct and salutary principle. And, if we wish to revive its influence among the people, this will not be done, we apprehend, by cheapening the currency of his doctrine, and bringing it down to the level of the popular understanding. It must be by other tracts than those of political economy, that we shall recover the descending habit of our countrymen. It must be by addresses of a more powerful character, than those which point to the futurities of an earthly existence. It must be, not

by men labouring, however strenuously, after some great political achievement, but by men labouring for the good of imperishable spirits—by men who have their conversation in heaven, and who, with their eye full upon its glories, feel the comparative insignificance of the pilgrimage which leads to it. And not till we recall the Christianity—shall we ever recall the considerate sobriety, the steady equalised comfort, the virtuous independence of a generation, the habit and the memory of which are so fast departing away from us.—*Christian and Economic Polity of a Nation.*

XXV. Section VIII. § 5.—*The effect of Christianity in raising the Standard of Enjoyment.*

Our political writers, if at all honestly desirous of obtaining a fulfilment for their own speculation, should look towards the men who are fitted to expatiate among the people, in the capacity of their most acceptable and efficient moralists. It is evident that they themselves are not the best adapted for such a practical movement through a community of human beings. It is not by any topic or any demonstration of theirs, that we can at all look for a general welcome and admittance amongst families. Let one of their number, for example, go forth with the argument of Malthus, or any other of the lessons of political economy, and that, for the purpose of enlightening the practice and observation of his neighbourhood. The very first reception that he met with, would, in all likelihood, check the farther progress of this moral and benevolent adventure, and stamp upon it all the folly and all the fruitlessness of Quixotism. People would laugh, or wonder, or be offended; and a sense of the utterly ridiculous would soon attach itself to this expedition, and lead him to abandon it. Now, herein lies the great initial superiority which the merely Christian has over the merely civil philanthropist. He is armed with a topic of ready and pertinent introduction, with which he may go round a population, and come into close and extensive contact with all the families. Let his errand be connected with religion; and, even though a very obscure and wholly unsanctioned individual, may he enter within the precincts of nearly every household, and not meet with one act of rudeness or resistance during the whole of his progress. Should he only, for example, invite their young to his Sabbath-School, he, with this for his professed object, would find himself in possession of a passport, upon which, and more especially among the common ranks of society, he might step into almost every dwelling-place; and

engage the inmates in conversations of piety; and leave, at least, the sensations of cordiality and gratitude behind him; and pave the way for successive applications of the same influence; and secure this acknowledgment in favour of his subject, that it is worthy of being proposed on the one side, and worthy of being entertained and patiently listened to, on the other. It is not of his final success that we are now speaking. It is of his advantageous outset. It is of that wide and effectual door of access to the population, which the Christian philanthropist has, and which the civil philanthropist has not—and from which it follows, that if the lessons of the former are at all fitted to induce a habit favourable to the objects of the latter, the economist who underrates the gospel of Jesus Christ, and the zeal of its devoted labourers, is deposing from their rightful estimation, the best auxiliaries of his cause.

And it would save a world of misconception, were it distinctly kept in mind, that, for the purpose of giving effect to the lessons of the economist, it is not necessary for him who labours in the gospel vineyard, either to teach, or even so much as to understand, these lessons. Let him simply confine himself to his own strict and peculiar business—let him labour for immortality alone—let his single aim be to convert and to christianise, and, as the result of prayer and exertion, to succeed in depositing with some the faith of the New Testament, so as that they shall hold forth to the esteem and the imitation of many, the virtues of the New Testament; and he does more for the civil and economical well-being of his neighbourhood, than he ever could do by the influence of all secular demonstration. Let his desire and his devotedness be exclusively towards the life that is to come, and without borrowing one argument from the interest of the life that now is, will he do more to bless and to adorn its condition, than can be done by all the other efforts of patriotism and philosophy put together. It were worse than ridiculous, and it most assuredly is not requisite, for him to become the champion of any economic theory, with the principles of which he should constantly be infusing either his pulpit or his parochial ministrations. His office may be upheld in the entire aspect of its sacredness; and the main desire and prayer of his heart towards God, in behalf of his brethren, may be that they should be saved; and the engrossment of his mind with the one thing needful, may be as complete as was that of the Apostle, who determined to know nothing among his hearers, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified—and yet, such is the fulness of the blessing of the gospel with which he is fraught, that while he renders the best possible service to the converts whom, under the Spirit of God, he has gained to its cause; he also, in the person of these con-

verts, renders the best possible contribution to the temporal good of society. It is enough, that they have been rescued from the dominion of sensuality;—it is enough, that they have become the disciples of that book, which, while it teaches them to be fervent in spirit, teaches them also to be not slothful in business;—it is enough, that the Christian faith has been formed with such power in their hearts, as to bring out the Christian morals into visible exemplification upon their history;—it is enough, that the principle within them, if it do not propagate its own likeness in others, can at least, like the salt to which they have been compared, season a whole vicinity with many of its kindred and secondary attributes. There is not a more familiar exhibition in humble life, than that alliance, in virtue of which a Christian family is almost always sure to be a well-conditioned family. And yet its members are utterly unversant, either in the maxims or in the speculations of political science. They occupy the right place in a rightly-constituted and well-going mechanism; but the mechanism itself is what they never hear of, and could not comprehend. Their Christian adviser never reads them a lesson from the writings of any economist; and yet the moral habit to which the former has been the instrument of conducting them, is that which brings them into a state of practical conformity with the soundest and most valuable lessons which the latter can devise. And now that habit and character and education among the poor, have become the mighty elements of all that is recent in political theory—as well may the inventor of a philosophical apparatus, disown the aid of those artisans, who, in utter ignorance of its use, only know how to prepare and put together its materials—as may the most sound and ingenious speculator in the walks of civil economy, disown the aid of those Christian labourers, who, in utter ignorance of the new doctrine of population, only know how to officiate in that path of exertion, by which the members of our actual population may be made pure, and prudent, and pious.—*Christian and Economic Polity of a Nation.*

XXVI. Section VIII. § 8.—*The effect of a well-administered Parochial System in Scotland.*

There is a most frightful picture given of the state of Scotland in 1698, by Fletcher of Saltoun, as appears from the following extract.—

There are at this day in Scotland (besides a great number of families very meanly provided for by the church boxes, with

others who, with living upon bad food, fall into various diseases) 200,000 people begging from door to door. These are not only no ways advantageous, but a very grievous burden to so poor a country; and though the number of them be perhaps double to what it was formerly, by reason of the present great distress, yet in all times there have been about 100,000 of these vagabonds, who have lived without any regard or submission either to the laws of the land, or even of those of God and nature; fathers incestuously accompanying their own daughters, the son with the mother, and the brother with the sister. No magistrate could ever discover or be informed which way any of these wretches died, or that ever they were baptized. Many murderers have been discovered among them; and they are not only a most unspeakable oppression to the poor tenants, (who, if they give not bread or some sort of provision to perhaps forty such villains in one day, are sure to be insulted by them,) but they rob many poor people who live in houses distant from any neighbourhood. In years of plenty many thousands of them meet together in the mountains, where they feast and riot for many days; and at country weddings, markets, burials, and other the like public occasions, they are to be seen, both men and women, perpetually drunk, cursing, blaspheming, and fighting together.

Does it appear, from historical records, that that state of things continued long after the date of the work of Fletcher of Saltoun?—It appears, from very distinct historical documents, that that state of things subsided almost *per saltum*, very suddenly indeed, when the population had leave to repose from the religious persecutions, and the parochial system of education was again general. They were besides plied from Sabbath to Sabbath by an efficient and acceptable clergy, in consequence of which, the transformation appears to have been quite marvellous. The extract I have now read, refers to the year 1698. The extract I am about to read, refers to a period of time only nineteen years distant, 1717. It is taken from Defoe, the author of Robinson Crusoe. "The people," says he, "are restrained in the ordinary practice of common immoralities, such as swearing, drunkenness, slander, fornication, and the like. As to theft, murder, and other capital crimes, they come under the cognizance of the civil magistrate as in other countries; but in those things which the church has power to punish, the people being constantly and impartially prosecuted, they are thereby the more restrained, kept sober, and under government, and you may pass through twenty towns in Scotland without seeing any broil, or hearing one oath sworn in the streets; whereas, if a blind man was to come from there into England, he shall know the first town he sets his foot in within

the English border, by hearing the name of God blasphemed and profanely used, even by the very little children on the street."—*Evidence before the Commons' Committee.*

XXVII. Section IX. § 8.—*Effect of a Poor Rate in Reducing Wages to the level of a Charity Allowance.*

The following little narrative is by the overseer of Long Burton, in Dorsetshire; a parish with a population of only three hundred and twenty-seven, and therefore peculiarly adapted for the distinct exhibition of any influence which its parochial economy might have on the state of its inhabitants.

The overseer had three able-bodied men out of employment, and whom it fell upon him to dispose of. The farmers all saturated with workmen, could not take them in; and rather than send them to work upon the roads, he applied to a master mason in the neighbourhood, who engaged to take their services at the low rate of six shillings in the week—the parish to make up the deficiency to the three men, so as that they should, on the whole, have fifteen pence a-week for each member of their families. The mason had previously in his employment, from seven to ten men, at the weekly wage of eight or nine shillings each. But no sooner did he take in these three supernumeraries from the parish at six shillings, than he began to treat anew with his old workmen, and threatened to discharge them if they would not consent to a lower wage. This of course would have thrown them all upon the parish, for the difference between their reduced and their present wages; upon perceiving which, the overseer instantly drew back his three men from the mason, and at length contrived to dispose of them otherwise.[1] Upon this the wages of the journeymen masons reverted to what they were before.—*Christian and Economic Polity of a Nation.*

[1] The following is an extract of a letter received from the overseer, Mr. Poole:—

"The facts respecting the three men at Long Burton, were as follows: we had three able men out of employ, and rather than send them on the roads to work, we engaged with Mr. Perratt, the mason, for them, at six shillings per week each. Mr. Perratt was at that time giving his men (from seven to ten men) eight or nine shillings each. Mr. Perratt then saw he could get men at a lower rate, and informed some of his old hands that he should discharge and lower the wages; therefore, in consequence those men (or many of them) would, at their discharge, become very burdensome to the parish of Long Burton. We immediately saw our error, of letting him have men at a low rate, (for recollect, it was one or two shillings lower than the farmers were giving at that time,) and took the men back on the roads at certain prices, so as to make their earnings fifteen pence per head, for their families; which, with Mr. Perratt's six shillings per week, we were obliged to make up from the parish to fifteen pence per head, per week."

XXVIII. Section IX. § 10.—*Proportion between the Price of Labour and the Number of Labourers.*

Labour might be considered in the light of a marketable commodity—the supply of which is measured by the number of labourers—and the price of which is regulated, as in other instances, by the proportion between this supply, and the demand. This price partakes, with that of the necessaries of life, in being liable to great fluctuation; and on the same principle, too, but in a sort of reverse direction. It is the urgent need of subsistence which so raises articles of the first necessity, even upon a very slight shortcoming from their usual quantity in the market. And it is the same urgent need of subsistence which so lowers the price of labour; and that, upon a very slight overplus in the number of labourers. What, in fact, looking to one side of the negotiation, may be called the demand of the capitalists for labour,—when looking to the other side of it, may be called the demand of the labourers for employment; and, in this latter demand, there may be all the importunity and vehemence of a demand for the necessaries of life. Employment, in fact, is the vehicle on which these necessaries are brought to their door; and should there be more hands than are wanted, rather than be thrown out of the competition altogether, there will be a general cheapening of their labour, and so that the fall in its price shall go greatly beyond the excess in the number of labourers. Men must have subsistence; and if employment be the essential stepping-stone to this, men must have employment;—and thus it is that capitalists have the same control over workmen, when there is an excess in their number, which the holders of the necessaries of life have over their customers, when there is a deficiency in the crop. And so, the price of labour too is a most tremulously variable element, and has as wide a range of fluctuation as the price of corn. A very small excess in the number of labourers will create a much greater proportional reduction in their wages. Should twenty thousand weavers of muslin be adequate, on a fair recompense for their work, to meet the natural demand that there is in that branch of manufacture, an additional thousand of these unemployed, and going about with their solicitations and offers among the master-manufacturers, would bring a fearful distress and deficiency on the circumstances of the whole body. The wages would fall by much more than a twentieth part of what they were originally; and thus, by a very trifling excess in the number of workmen, might a very sore and widely felt depression be brought upon the comfort and sufficiency of the lower orders.

Now, however melancholy this contemplation might be in the first instance, yet, by dwelling upon it a little further, we shall be led to discover certain outlets and reparations that might cause us to look more hopefully than ever on the future destinies of our species. One thing is clear, that if so small a fractional excess in the supply of labour, over its demand, is enough to account for a very great deficiency in its remuneration, then, after all, it may lie within the compass of a small fractional relief to bring back the remuneration to its proper level, and so restore the desirable equilibrium between the wages of a workman and the wants of his family. It is comfortable to know, that the misery of an overwrought trade is capable of being retrieved on such easy terms—and that could either the present small excess of labourers be otherwise disposed of, or their future annual supply be somewhat and slightly reduced, then might well-paid, and well-conditioned industry, that most cheerful of all spectacles, again be realised. Could any expedient be devised by which the number of labourers might be more equalised to the need that there is for them, then, instead of the manufacturers having so oppressive a control over the workmen, workmen might in some degree have a control over manufacturers. We should certainly regard it as a far more healthful state of the community, if our workmen, instead of having to seek employment, were to be sought after; and that masters had to go in quest of service, rather than that labourers had to go a-begging for it. It is most piteous to see a population lying prostrate and overwhelmed under the weight of their own numbers; nor are we aware of a finer object, both for the wisdom and benevolence of patriotism, than to devise a method by which the lower orders might be rescued from this state of apparent helplessness. This would be done, if they were only relieved from the pressure of that competition by which they now elbow out, or beat down each other; but nothing more certain, than that not till the number of workmen bears a less proportion to the need which there is for them, will they be able to treat more independently with their employers, or make a stand against all such terms of remuneration, as would degrade their families beneath the par of human comfort.

That a very small excess of workmen over the need which there is for them, will create much more than a proportional depression in their wages, is just as true, as that a very small deficiency in the supply of the corn-market will create much more than a proportional rise in the price of that commodity. Both are true, and on the same principle too. It is, in either case, a very sore mischief, traceable to a very slight cause; and which, therefore, perhaps, may admit of being cured by the application of a very slight corrective. It appears, by M'Pherson's

Annals of Commerce, that the average importation of corn, during a great many years, exclusive of the two remarkable seasons of scarcity in 1800 and 1801, did not amount to more than eleven days' consumption annually; and that even the greatest importation ever known, did not amount to one-tenth of the consumption of the island. These might appear but fractional remedies, which could be easily dispensed with; and so, the good of importation might come to be under-rated. But minute as these annual supplies may appear in themselves, they are momentous in their consequences; and lower the price of corn in the market, far more than they add to the stock of it. And, it is even so, of the relation which subsists between the number of people in a country, and the degree of comfort which they enjoy. A very small excess in the number, will operate a very great reduction upon the comfort. But just as a slight importation will restore the price of necessaries to their fair and natural level, so may either a slight exportation of our people, such as to dispose of their small excess, or a slight change of habits, such as to prevent their small excess, have the effect of raising the lower orders to that condition, in which every generous friend of humanity would rejoice to behold them.—*Christian and Economic Polity of a Nation.*

XXIX. Section XII. § 6.—*Necessity for the Preventive Check long anterior to a perfect cultivation of the Earth.*

The imagination of many is, that, not until the world be fully cultivated and fully peopled, shall we have any practical interest in the question. They seem to think of the doctrine of Malthus, that the consideration of it may, with all safety, be postponed, till the agriculture of every country and every clime have been carried to its extreme perfection; and that, meanwhile, the population may proceed as rapidly and recklessly as it may. When a household is straitened by its excessive numbers, or a parish is oppressed by its redundant families—they would bar every argument about the proximate causes of this inconvenience, by the allegation, that there were still thousands of unreclaimed acres at home, or millions in distant places of the earth, though of as little real or substantial consequence to the suffering parties, as if the land were situated in another planet. They appear to conceive, that ere any body can be felt as an obstacle to our progress, it must have come to a dead stand—not aware that to act as a check or impediment, it has only to move more slowly, though in the same direction,

than at the rate in which we are advancing ourselves. They proceed on the idea, that no shock or collision can be felt but by the stroke of an impellent on a body at rest—whereas it is enough if the body be but moving at a tardier pace. In the one case, the strength of the collision would be estimated by the whole velocity—yet, in the other, there might still be a very hard collision, though estimated only by a difference of velocities. It is thus that, for the continued pressure of the world's population on its food, it is far from necessary that the food should have reached that stationary maximum, beyond which it cannot be carried. It is enough, for this purpose, that the limit of the world's abundance, though it does recede, should recede more slowly than *would* the limit of the world's population. A pressure, and that a very severe one, may be felt for many ages together, from a difference in the mere tendencies of their increase. The man, who so runs as to break his head against a wall, might receive a severe contusion, even to the breaking of his head, if, instead of a wall, it had been a slowly retiring barrier. And therefore we do not antedate matters, by taking up now the consideration of Malthus' preventive and positive checks to population. There is scarcely a period, even in the bygone history of the world, when the former checks have not been called for, and the latter have not been in actual operation. To postpone either the argument or its application till the agriculture of the world shall be perfected, is a most unpractical, as well as a most unintelligent view of the question—for long ere this distant consummation can be realized, and even now, may the obstacle of a slowly-retiring limit begin to be felt. The tendency of a progressive population to outstrip the progressive culture of the earth, may put mankind into a condition of straitness and difficulty—and that for many generations before the earth shall be wholly cultivated. We are not sure, but it may have done so from the commencement of the race, and throughout all its generations. Certain it is, at all events, that the produce of the soil cannot be made to increase at the rate that population *would* increase. Neither mechanical invention, nor more intense manual labour, is sufficient for this purpose. On the supposition that the numbers of mankind were to increase up to their natural capability of increase, no human skill or human labour, though doing their uttermost, could suffice for raising a produce up to the population—nor will the mass of society ever be upheld in comfort, without the operation of certain other principles, by which to restrain the excess of the population over the produce.—*Political Economy.*

XXX. Section XII. § 6. — *Distinction between a National Provision for Indigence, and a National Provision for Instruction.*

Some have assimilated an endowment for the relief of indigence, to an endowment for the support of literary or Christian instruction. The two cases, so far from being at all like in principle, stand in direct and diametric opposition to each other. We desiderate the latter endowment, because of the languor of the intellectual or spiritual appetency; insomuch that men, left to themselves, seldom or never, originate a movement towards learning. We deprecate the former endowment, because, in the strength of the physical appetency, we have the surest guarantee that men will do their uttermost for good; and a public charity, having this for its object, by lessening the industry and forethought that would have been otherwise put forth in the cause, both adds to the wants, and detracts from the real worth and virtue of the species. And, besides, there is no such strength of compassion for the sufferings of the moral or spiritual, that there is for those of physical destitution. An endowment for education may be necessary to supplement the one, while an endowment for charity may do the greatest moral and economic mischief, by superseding the other. Relatives and neighbours could bear to see a man ignorant, or even vicious. They could not bear to see him starve.—*Political Economy.*

XXXI. Section XII. § 11.— *Testimony of a Scottish Clergyman on the Introduction of a Poor Rate into his Parish.*

"The Moderator then, with the entire concurrence of the Kirk-Session, begins his remarks with expressing his deep regret that the one system has been abandoned, and that the other has been substituted in its place; for his decided opinion is, that, in parishes where there is a prevailing sense of religion and of duty, the voluntary has an immeasurable advantage over the compulsory. In giving utterance to this conviction, he only reiterates the same sentiments he ever held on the subject, and which, year after year, he was accustomed, in his annual manifestoes, to repeat *usque ad nauseum*. He will now give the reason, once for all, which has led him to this preference; and, assuredly, he has not been brought to the opinion which he holds on account of the supposed superior economy of the

voluntary over the compulsory system—a very low ground of preference for a minister of the gospel to build on—but altogether on account of the superior comforts and advantages which it brings to the poor themselves. This is the ground on which he founds his preference, and it is the one he has ever had in view as often as he declared his opinion on the subject. It may be true that more is given to the pauper in hard cash on the compulsory, than on the voluntary scheme—at least more appears in the day-book of the treasurer in the one case than in the other; but if the attentions and kindnesses of neighbours and friends, in consequence of the giving of that greater sum, are withdrawn,—and the tendency of the compulsory is to lead to their withdrawal, and the tendency of the voluntary is to encourage them—attentions and kindnesses which cannot be bought, and of which no record is kept, and which constitute the very all in all of the poor man's earthly happiness—the receipt of a few monthly additional shillings will be to him an inadequate compensation. What the law of man says to the owner of property is, 'The proportion of the assessment which has been laid upon you must be paid. There is no escaping from it. You must either pay or go to prison. Your excuses cannot be listened to. We have all burdens. Your poor cousins may go to the Kirk-Session, and they are obliged to relieve them.' Well, what follows? The assessment is paid—in many cases sulkily, in some inconveniently; and the advice tendered is literally taken, and their poor dependants, who were formerly fed and clad by them, and whose wants were never heard of before, are thrown on the public for relief."

"And how often, in the course of the moderator's experience, has he had occasion to observe the benevolence of his parishioners towards their neighbours when in distress,—nay, he has seen these beautiful precepts of Scripture, which he has just now quoted, literally reduced by them to practice! How often, in a locality not abounding, it may be, in this world's wealth, but rich in Christian principle, has he seen neighbours, as if animated with one heart and soul, ministering, by every means in their power, to the comfort of the poor man who lived near them when labouring under distress,—one kind female bringing a little of her own tea and sugar; another some warm broth about dinner-time; another, on less considerate, a piece of flannel, or some other useful article which she has seen to be needed; a fourth, having nothing of her own to spare, coming every evening to assist in making the sick man's bed; a fifth, in like circumstances, washing his clothes as often as needed; and all, in short, in every possible way, vying as it were with each other in acts of kindness and Christian love! In the mean time, the spiritual wants of the sick man are not neglected;

for the elders of the church to which he belongs have been called, and arrangements have been made among the pious acquaintance of the sick man, the members, it may be, of the prayer-meeting of which he formed a part, to have exercise regularly conducted every evening in his presence. Nor are acts of benevolence confined to females. How often has he observed males also, six or eight of them, so soon as they come to know that there was want in any of the houses in their neighbourhood, without waiting to be prompted by others, but from mere good-will and Christian principle, taking active steps for its relief; and, having judiciously divided the town into convenient districts, it was their practice to go, two and two, to those whom they knew to be benevolent and possessed of this world's goods in each of them; and they never halted, or were 'wearied in well-doing,' till they had canvassed the whole locality which had been assigned to them, and had gathered a purse less or more filled for the persons for whom they pleaded! And these humble and philanthropic individuals, be it recorded, were scarcely in a single instance frowned away from the doors of the persons to whom they applied, but they were welcomed as men going on an errand of mercy; for the considerate were aware that they had the best opportunities of being acquainted with the character and circumstances of the family for whom they interceded, and the pious remembered that it is written in God's book, that 'whosoever hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion, how dwelleth the love of God in him?' and something was always given, according to the nature and urgency of the case which had been submitted to them. In the meantime, the guardians of the poor are consulted, and the conduct of the neighbours unto the family that was distressed is heartily approved of; and a consideration of what would be required weekly for their support is taken, and a monthly allowance of some five or six shillings is added by the Kirk-Session, that the contents of the purse which had been collected might last as long as possible; and the whole families of this little band of Christian philanthropists, and others like minded, having become interested in the sufferers, and a great many hearts, heads, and hands having been thus set in motion, a degree of actual comfort has in this way been secured for them, which no counted penny—no allowance, however liberal, which extorted charity has been ever known to dole out to the wretched —could have purchased. The small sum of five or six shillings monthly, is all of course that appears in their books as bestowed by the Kirk-Session on the sufferers; and it is not to be wondered at, therefore, that philanthropic men at a distance, on looking at the paltry sums as there recorded, should proclaim

their inadequacy; for the members of Session should have been the first to do the same, had they been ignorant of all that kind friends and neighbours had privately and unostentatiously and perseveringly been doing for the comfort and support of the afflicted ones, who had been seemingly so much neglected.

"And this mode of providing for the wants of the poor, so far from being a rare occurence in times past, has been the one generally adopted; and the Moderator can truly say, that it has been witnessed by him almost every other month, and sometimes more frequeutly, when the case of the poor is aggravated by any general calamity, such as epidemic disease, unfruitful seasons, and the fluctuations in trade and commerce, during the whole course of his ministry down to the very day when poor-rates, even in a modified shape, were unhappily introduced among us. It was then that a sudden change in the feelings of his parishioners took place. So soon as they were made aware that proprietors of houses rented at the trifling sum of three or four pounds must pay their share of the public assessment for the support of the poor, than it was immediately inferred, that, when cases of destitution occurred in their vicinity, the burden of relieving it no longer lay upon them; and so quickly has the lesson been learned, that it was but the other day, when a neighbour's assistance was asked to do some kindly office to a sick man, she declared, that, now that poor-rates were laid on, she would not lay a hand upon the dying man—no, not so much as to assist in turning him in his bed—till she was informed who was to pay her. The advice of neighbours and of landlords is, 'Go to the Kirk-Session: State your case to them—they are bound to listen to your application.' And they do consider themselves bound to listen to every application that is made to them, from whatever quarter it proceeds; but it is public money that has been intrusted to their management, and many eyes are upon them; and before the applicants can be admitted upon the poor's roll—for there is now a roll—many steps must be taken, and conversations must be held, and consultations conducted, and visitations made, and scrutinous inquiries instituted, and inventories of effects taken and legally made over; and, though the applicants do make good their claim to the assistance required by them, and though a monthly aliment, comparatively liberal, has been allowed them, yet their feelings have been so much hurt, and their spirits so much crushed, by the ordeal they have been compelled to go through, that they find, many of them by bitter experience, that the shillings they receive are but a poor substitute for the kindnesses and labours of love, which, at a former period, they could have counted on receiving from their neighbours, and which they themselves had been accustomed, in their better

days, to extend towards others, when, by the infliction of Providence, they were in like circumstances as they now find themselves to be. And many a modest and needy applicant, rather than have their feelings wounded in this way, feel themselves forced to give up the contest altogether in despair,—preferriug the evils of extreme poverty and starvation, and cold and nakedness, to the full disclosure of their situation, and to all the humiliating and mortifying circumstances with which it is attended, and to the seeming doubting of their representations, all of which their gentle and sensitive nature will not permit them to encounter; while the forward and the shameless and the undeserving, to whom the arts of imposture are familiar,—who are poor, perhaps, because they will not work, or because they have spent in debauchery what they have earned,—stand their ground, set the scrutinators at defiance, and are successful.

And what is the tendency of this system on society? In time it comes to be felt in all its interests. The kindly intercourse which ought to exist between the rich and the poor, and which harmonizes so beautifully with the spirit of the gospel, having been gradually discontinued, the gulf which separates the two classes, who ought to have but one interest in common between them, continually becomes deeper and wider; for first an estrangement has taken place, then a positive dislike, then a spirit approaching to actual hostility has been engendered, and the poor learn to look to the rich with envy, and the rich to look down upon the poor with feelings of surprise and disappointment and displeasure, that the large sums which they have contributed to their relief have excited in them no gratitude, till at last their mutual jealousies become so violent that they cannot speak of each other but in terms of acrimony and vituperation.

"This report is melancholy and gloomy throughout. Never, in the course of his ministry, have the Moderator's hopes of the well-being of his beloved parish, both in an economical and a spiritual view, been lower than they are at present; for not only is pauperism increasing, but vice of every kind is becoming frightfully prevalent."

"O, that we could retrace our steps! O, that we were in the same situation as we were in former times! But these are vain wishes. The Rubicon has been passed; and we have, I fear, no alternative but to go on from bad to worse, and from worse to 'worser' still. A legal assessment out-and-out on means and substance will inevitably be our next fatal step in our downward progress; and where we are to land at last—what shall be the end thereof—is known to Him only who knoweth the whole from the begininng. It is but a poor consolation to me, that having foreseen the evils, I warned my

parishioners of the danger; for surely nothing could have been more unhappy than the condition of Cassandra—'Dei jussu non unquam credita Teucris;' who is fabled to have had the gift of foreseeing evils, but whose warnings were destined to be disregarded. The great objection to the voluntary scheme of relieving the wants of the poor, and indeed the only one that was incessantly and clamorously dinned in my ears, was, that the burden fell exclusively on the generous and philanthropic, while the penurious and hard-hearted escaped: But there was not much in this; for verily both will have their reward; and perhaps even the persons who so urgently pressed the objection, if they have not already, may come to be convinced, that it would have been better for them 'to have borne the ills they knew of, than to encounter those of which they had then no experience.'"—*Statement relative to the Parish of Kirriemuir, by Thomas Easton, D.D.*

XXXII. Section XII. § 12.—*Testimony of an English Gentleman on the Poor Law System of his country.*

"Nice discrimination cannot enter into the operations and practice of officials, or into accounts which must be kept with rigid strictness, and wholesale uniformity:—nor that fine elastic touch be applied of sympathy and vital charity, which discriminates the pulse of misery in its infinite variety, discerns the real seat of the wound, and applies the oil and the balm with a truth and touch as exact, as tender, and as delicate. But all stomachs must be of the same size; all appetites must relish the same food, on the same days of the week; all maladies and sores and accidents of life must be healed by the same medicine.

"A poor-law can hardly be administered any where except in connection with police regulations; and this of necessity places misery and misfortune in close contact with crime and punishment. At least this is eminently the case in England. Thieves, able-bodied sturdy vagrants, persons travelling to seek for work, or returning to their homes, cripples, blind, infirm, children, persons sick from the visitation of God, from accident, or intemperance,—all are classed and clubbed together, and are placed in the same category by the receipt of a penny, and are liable to be dealt with according to law, under the condemned title of beggars. A poor and very decent woman, formerly a maid-servant, was taken up on the 19th of last May, for carrying round a petition signed by several ladies who knew her, and who testified to the truth of the statement of her mis-

fortune, and had put themselves down for subscriptions. She was much astonished on being told that she had been infringing the law."

"The necessary connexion between a poor-law and these severe police regulations, is evidenced by the tendency towards them in every country in Europe in which a legal provision for the poor is made the chief basis of their relief.

"We say that the poor-law system is bad in principle—that it is a mere expedient; and that it ought never to supersede the more free and active distribution of relief by voluntary and personal charity;—that a resort to a compulsory provision for the poor is the symptom of a low state of religion in a country, and of public principle;—that a disposition to place a chief reliance upon such a provision is the sign of a diseased and morbid constitution, and an enervation almost desperate;—and that there is no hope of restitution to vigour and to health in such cases, but by waking up again the dormant principles and energies of nature, and returning as fast as possible to sober and rational habits, by voluntary almsgiving,—superseding the compulsory provision."

"Count Holstein, in answer to the inquiries of our Foreign Secretary of State in 1833, respecting the working of the poor-law in Denmark, states,—

"'The morality of the rich man suffers; for the natural moral relation between him and the poor man has become completely severed. There is no place left for the exercise of his benevolence. Being obliged to give, he does it with reluctance; and thus is the highest principle of charitable action, Christian love, exposed to great danger of destruction.'

"Mr. Browne, in his Report from the same country, adds,—

"'What is given is afforded with dislike and reluctance. The higher orders have become cold and uncharitable; and, in short, ere long, unless some strenuous steps are taken, Denmark will drink deep of the bitter cup of which England, by a similar system, has been so long drinking to her grievous cost.'—*Senior's Foreign Poor Law*, pp. 42, 44.

"The poor-law had been introduced into Denmark at that time only thirty-five years.

"The following case exemplifies the relative sympathies and liberality of the rich towards the poor, and of the poor towards each other, under the operation of our compulsory system. A bricklayer named Hogan, about three months since, met with an accident, and died the same night at eleven o'clock. His only child died of a fever, at seven the same evening. Several gentlefolks who were consulted, and took an interest in the case, agreed that it would be right, by all means, to let the parish bury them; and limit all charity to the relief of the widow. His

fellow-workmen subscribed among themselves, and buried both the child and the husband."

"The frugality, and force of character, and independence of the labouring man, are weakened, if not destroyed, by this miserable dependence. The amount given always creates a greater expectation than it realizes."

"The mutual dependence of parents and children, and other relatives, is also impaired, and their natural affection diminished. Being comparatively independent of each other, the affections become blunted. We shall presently bring to notice the existence and exuberance of these feelings in all their depth and freshness, in those countries of Europe in which they are yet uninvaded by a poor-law. In the meantime, the testimonies are abundant to the destructive effect in this and other countries, where our system of poor-laws exists.

"As early as the act 7 Jac. 1, c. 4, the statute of Elizabeth was represented as having a tendency to produce improvidence, and to weaken the ties of natural affection. And these effects have been growing into ripeness ever since.

"Mr. Browne, in the Report before mentioned, says of Denmark,—

"'The poor-law greatly weakens the frugal principle.'—'It tends to harden the heart of the poor man, who demands with all that authority with which the legal right to provision invests him. There is no thankfulness for what is gotten, and what is given is afforded with dislike and reluctance.'—'Poverty has been greatly increased by weakening the springs of individual effort, and destroying independence of character. The lower orders have become tricky, sturdy, and unobliging; the higher orders, cold and uncharitable.'—'It disturbs the natural dependence and affection of parent and child. The latter feels his parent comparatively needless to him; he obtains support elsewhere; and the former feels the obligation to support the latter greatly diminished. In short, being comparatively independent of each other, the affections must inevitably become blunted.'—*Senior's Foreign Poor Law*, pp. 42, 43.

"What we have said is independent of the religious obligation 'to visit the fatherless and poor in their affliction,' and of the promise made to those who visit the sick by Him, who Himself spent his whole time in going about doing good. This obligation ought of itself to render all our arguments needless."

"This question we propose to solve. A practical proposition is required; and we make suggestion of a practical and definite measure. 'Let the relief of the out-door poor by the guardians of unions be given up, and let it be restored to the parishes.'"

"All the evils that we have already pointed out as resulting from law-forced charity and a system of official relief, enter still more deeply into our present system under the changes introduced by the Poor-Law Amendment Act. The instruments applied are mechanical. The machinery used is adapted to wholesale manufacture;—to reducing all articles to procrustian uniformity;—to turning out pieces of goods of the same exact size, and pattern, and length. It is a steam-engine system, well worthy of this age of physical invention and mechanical contrivance; and well fitted to bring its wares into a marketable fashion and appearance, sufficient for the current discernment of customers, at the lowest cost, and with the utmost dispatch and regularity. Discrimination cannot enter into the system. The very term 'classification,' the beau-ideal of poor-law-commissioner management, excludes the notion of it. The very words 'general rules and regulations' exclude the possibility of it."

"To reduce all stomachs of the same sex and age to the same calibre,—to reduce all habits and skill and tastes to a few fixed occupations,—is abhorrent enough to the variety of human nature; but to test all shapes and habits of the body and mind, all tastes and desires and feelings, by the workhouse, to try all claims to relief by this assay, the measure of actual endurance from poverty by the capacity to bear this other endurance in the alternative,—this is certainly one of the boldest and most fallacious attempts to enforce mechanical rule and contrivance upon human minds and motives that has ever been ventured upon by town-made politicians.

"While this deformed and rigid mask, incapable of all play of feature and countenance, without motion or expression, is thus placed before the face of real charity by the very use and nature of official relief, its deformities are still more characteristic, and become more essential, in proportion as the districts are enlarged, over which one machine and system extends its operations."

"We say that the most essential ingredient in poor-relief is personal communication, and knowledge of the exact condition of the objects of it.—That this communication can be kept up, can be even attempted, only in small divisions and districts; and that this creation and extension of large districts, by unions of parishes, and unions of unions, is the most essential evil in the new system of poor-law administration."

"But we particularly object to this plan of extensive districts, because it prevents the experiment of returning in any degree to that wholesome system and condition, in which private and voluntary alms-giving supersedes the public com-

pulsory provision, and renders the law of forced charity dormant and obsolete. No one parish can be encouraged to attempt such a system, while it is bound up in interests and expenses with other parishes in a union, the whole machinery of which is connected and moves together. If a parish were to relieve the union from all burden in respect of it, and were to maintain its whole poor by private liberality, yet the contributions to the union workhouses would be still demanded, and the share of wages to the union officers must be paid. Nevertheless we say that it is the duty of parishes to make this experiment. As it is the duty of individuals to make this endeavour in a single parish, though the charitable few must be additionally burdened by such a measure, and the selfish majority relieved by it,—so it is the duty of parishes to agree within themselves, and attempt a like renovation, and to despise the paltry addition of expense which the demands of the union may impose upon them.

"But a few such successful attempts would bring about a general change, by showing the advantages of it. Whenever the public mind shall be prepared by experimental conviction, and its heart restored to healthy action by the use and habit of genuine Christian charity, the law must follow this impulse and be adapted to it. In the mean time we greatly lament the impediment which is created by the union system.

"But we must pursue this subject of the advantages of managing and relieving the poor in small districts. One chief advantage is, as we have just said, that the inhabitants of small districts would be enabled to make trial of restoring that only true system of poor-relief, the providing for the indigent and sick by voluntary charity; and thus superseding the compulsory provision. 'From the beginning,' observes Mr. Wilberforce, 'the Church relieved her own poor; and in parishes of due dimensions she might do so again.'"—*Parochial System*, p. 40.

"The economy of the poor-relief in Prussia, as described by the returns of Mr. Gibsone and Mr. Abercrombie, confirms our views on this subject in every particular.

"The whole of that country is divided into small districts, each comprising a moderate population. Even in the largest towns these districts never contain more than 1500 inhabitants, and in the smaller towns they contain from 400 to 1000. In villages, the management of the funds for relief of the poor resides in the mayor and some of the principal inhabitants; in the towns they are under a board of directors. These individuals are required to find out and verify the condition of the poor of their own district. Each township is governed by its own

particular laws and customs with regard to the management of the poor, and the whole is under the inspection of the first section of the Home Department.

"'As regards the manner of obtaining the necessary funds, everything is done by donations and private charity. Each house proprietor, each inhabitant of a floor or apartment, is in his turn visited by some member of the sub-committee of the direction. The donations from residents are generally monthly, and vary in amount according to the number of the family and the generosity of the donor.

"'The provision of the funds rests upon the charity and benevolence of the inhabitants.

"'Every proprietor of an estate, indeed every town and village, is bound to provide for those belonging to them. Should a proprietor or a community not fulfil this obligation, they are compelled to do so; *but this is seldom necessary.*

"'As regards the practical working of this system,' adds Mr. Abercrombie, 'I have no hesitation in affirming that it is found universally to succeed. That the effect upon the comfort, character, and condition of the inhabitants is, first, to afford speedy and sufficient means of relief when necessary; that *it prevents in a great degree false applications, inasmuch as that the districts being small, the really needy are more easily discovered;* and secondly, that *as no tax is fixed* for the maintenance of the poor, *it renders all classes more willing and anxious to assist,* according to their respective means, in sustaining the funds required for their support.'

"Mr. Gibsone says—

"'The regulations for the support of paupers operate beneficially on industry. Every proprietor of an estate, every community of a town or village, has unquestionably the most correct knowledge of the bodily condition, of the moral conduct, of the expertness, of the capability to earn a livelihood in whole or in part, and of the pecuniary circumstances of the needy persons under their jurisdiction, whom they are bound to support, as well as of the circumstances of their relatives. The pauper knows that aid must be given when necessary, and he applies to the proper authority for it, when not duly afforded; while he is, on the other hand, deterred from making exorbitant claims by his situation being so thoroughly known in every respect, and from ungrounded demands not being complied with. In general therefore neither the party called upon for assistance, nor that requiring it, inclines to let the authority interpose.'"—*Senior's For. P. L.*

"The reports made to our Foreign Secretary of State in 1833, of the provisions for the poor in different foreign countries, as contained in the Appendix to the Poor Law Report of

that date, and in Mr. Senior's work, named at the head of this article, supply us with the materials; as they have done in part of the picture which we have presented of the deadening and baneful effects of forced plans of poor relief. It is remarkable that it was with these returns and this evidence before them, that the government prepared, and the legislature passed, the bill which rendered more strict and cogent the legal form of relief. These recent and stringent measures however, so forcibly leaning in the wrong direction, are not without hope. It is the effect of violent proceedings that they frequently produce reaction. The necessity for voluntary alms has become greater, with the increased straitness and severity of the rules and limits of official assistance: and we thank God, that in some degree this call has been responded to, and this occasion has opened forth richer and more abundant sources of private charity than were wont to overflow and fertilize the dry and withered wastes and drooping pastures of this once bountiful and beneficent land. If the unionizing of unions, and the plan of large districts, do not prevent the experiment, we have hope of seeing the system of private and voluntary alms-giving gradually, but yet rapidly and effectually, grow and increase itself, till it swallows up at length and supersedes the use of all compulsory provision. We are well convinced that there could be no better sign and symptom, we think that there could be no better means and step towards the recovery of religious motive and principle in the country, and its political regeneration. But to our present purpose.

"The accounts received from those countries which have no forced provision for the poor are of the most striking and pleasing description. They present a picture of human nature and character which is quite new, and instructive, and awakening. They exhibit the feelings and characters of both rich and poor in a colouring and light amiable, honourable, and enviable. The rich are never to be found wanting in their alms, which expand and contract, and form and fit themselves to every necessity and occasion. There is no death from starvation in time of dearth or difficulty, no lavishness or abuse in time of prosperity. And what is very remarkable is, that there are not those signs of improvidence and profusion, and indiscriminate distribution of alms, which we are apt to attribute as the necessary concomitants of free and voluntary giving of charity for Christ's sake.

"The picture of the poor themselves is still more admirable and amiable. The people are industrious and frugal; honest towards their employers; and though the funds of charitable relief are known to be inexhaustible, yet they are indisposed to take advantage of them, or even to make use of them, unless

occasion really calls for it. Their mutual kindness towards each other is still more instructive and beautiful. They are generally kind-hearted. Their family affection is ardent and constant; the mutual assistance of relations and friends is always to be depended upon; and is ever ready, and preferred to foreign support, so long as there are means within the bosom or branches of the family. Even neighbours and parishioners live together with the friendly feelings of relationship, and with family union and affection.

"These are habits and principles of which we have little knowledge in this country. We can hardly believe or comprehend them. We are used to view things, even human life, with such calculating coldness, with such mechanical and heartless exactness, we have been so little apt to give religion full scope, and to obey its high rules and impulses with freedom, boldness, firmness, and faith, that we have not a belief of the possibility of man's life being moved and governed by such motives, or of our passions and feelings being so ruled and well directed, as to go before and lean onward the reason to the right and proper goal, and not away from it. Much less that society could be so impelled, except to ruin and fanaticism.

"Yet all these points are verified and exemplified by the returns before mentioned, and from which we now quote.

"France is returned as a country having no legal provision for the poor; but the system there seems to be a mixed one; the funds consisting principally of endowments, but partly of contributions, partly also of direct taxation; and the government for the most part directing the administration.

"'The Bretons are hospitable. Charity and hospitality are considered religious duties. Food and shelter for a night are never refused.'"—*Senior's For. P. L.* pp. 154—162.

"In Venice the funds are supplied by private and government contributions. There is no compulsory legal provision. The number of poor is immense owing to the fall of the Republic, and the great decay of the place. However, the return informs us that—

"'Cases of death by starvation never occur. Even during the great distress caused by the blockade in 1813, and the famine in 1817, no occurrence of this kind was known. In fact, the more urgent the circumstances are, the more abundant are the subscriptions and donations.

"'The poorer classes are remarkable for their kindness to each other in times of sickness and need. Many instances of this have fallen under my own observation.

"'There is much family affection in all classes of the Venetians; and in sickness, distress, and old age, among the poorer classes, they show every disposition to assist and relieve each other.

" 'The clergy, who have great influence over the lower classes, exert themselves much to cultivate the good feeling which subsists among them towards one another.'—*Ibid.* pp. 190—192.

" The annual expenditure of the commission of public charity alone is £100,000 among a population of 112,000."—*Private Alms and Poor Law Relief, by G. R. Bosanquet, Esq.*

XXXIII. Section XIII. § 7.—*Incompatibility of a General Poor Rate with a General System of Education.*

It is, indeed, a heavy incumbrance on the work of a clergyman, whose office it is to substitute among his people the graces of a new character, for the hardness, and the selfishness, and the depraved tendencies of nature, that, in addition to the primary and essential evils of the human constitution, he has to struggle, in his holy warfare, against a system so replete as pauperism is, with all that can minister to the worst, or that can wither up the best affections of our species. With what success can he acquit himself as a minister of the New Testament, in the presence of this legalised and widely spread temptation, by which every peasant of our land is solicited to cast away from him the brightest of those virtues wherewith the morality of this sacred volume is adorned? By what charm shall he woo them from earth, and bear their hearts aspiringly to heaven, while such a bait and such a bribery are held forth to all the appetites of earthliness,—or, how can he find a footing for the religion of charity and peace, in a land broiling with litigation throughout all its parishes, and where charity, transformed out of its loveliness, has now become an angry firebrand, for lighting up the most vindictive passions and the fiercest jealousies of our nature?—*Christian and Economic Polity of a Nation.*

It is a most important question for Ireland, whether you will submit for a time to its mendicity, or exchange that mendicity for a regular and compulsory pauperism. Now, on many accounts, I would prefer the former to the latter alternative; and one of my reasons is, that education will at length quell the one but not the other. It may be difficult to furnish the Committee with a satisfactory analysis of this matter: I feel assured that so it is, however much I may fail in expounding how it is. One thing is abundantly obvious, that the act of becoming a mendicant is one of unmixed degradation, and the self-respect inspired by education stands directly and diametrically opposed to it. It is not so with the act of becoming a pauper; a state

sanctioned by law, and in entering upon which, the consciousness of right, and the resolute assertion of it, awaken feelings that serve to temper the humiliation of charity. I think that this admits of historical illustration. The mendicity of Scotland gave way in a few years to its education. The pauperism and education of England have for many years advanced contemporaneously. I do not believe that the most efficient system of education which can be possibly devised will ever make head against the pauperism of England; at the very most, it would but give rise to two populations, distinguished from each other by opposite extremes of character. I should therefore be exceedingly sorry if Irish mendicity were exchanged for English pauperism. I think that the floating mendicity of Ireland will fall under the operation of those moral causes which might be brought to bear upon it; but if, in order to escape from this, you establish a law of pauperism, you will in fact establish so many parochial fixtures, a nucleus in every parish, around which your worst population will gather, and from which you will find it impossible to dislodge them. I should exceedingly regret, that under the influence of an impatience to be delivered from this evil of mendicity, you should, in getting quit of that which is conquerable by education, precipitate yourselves into that which is unconquerable by education. —*Evidence before the Commons' Committee.*

But we must here remark, that for the purpose of a general economic improvement, to be brought about by the means of Christian education, a gradual abolition of the compulsory provision for indigence, which now obtains in England, and hangs menacingly over Ireland, seems to us indispensable. We can anticipate no rise of wages, no elevation in the state and sufficiency of the working classes, from any efforts to instruct and Christianize them, however strenuous, if the pauperism and the education are to go on contemporaneously. We, in the first place, feel quite assured, from the moral influences of this public charity, that it operates as a dead weight on the ministrations of the clergymen, and stands most grievously in the way of their success. But, in the second place, however vigorous and effective his exertions may be, at the most, and while the present system of poor's laws continues, we shall have two distinct populations, each marked by opposite extremes of character. The clergyman, on the one hand, may reclaim hundreds to principle and sobriety, who shall form a wholesome and better class of peasantry. But the parish vestry, on the other, remains an attractive nucleus, around which there will gather and settle, in every little district of the land, a depraved and improvident class, whom the temptation of this legal charity has called into being, and who will bid inveterate defiance to

all the moral energy which might be brought to bear upon them. The very presence of such a class, even though but a fraction of the community, will, with their reckless habits, depress and overbear the general condition of labourers. A very few supernumeraries, we have seen, will suffice for this effect. So that whether the temptation to improvidence ope rates on all the people, or only on part of them, still that redundancy is generated which tells so adversely on the general rate of wages, and so on the comfort and circumstances of the population at large. Education will make head against men dicity. It will make head against poverty in any other form than that of being fixed and legalized, and invested with the power of challenging, as its right at the bar of justice, that relief which should have been left to the willing sympathies of nature. But shielded and encouraged as it is in the parishes of England, it will stand its ground, against every attempt to dislodge it from those innumerable fastnesses which it now occupies; and in spite of every counteractive, whether by the Christian or literary education of the people, will it remain an incubus on the prosperity and comfort of the lower orders.— *Political Economy.*

ON THE

APPLICATION OF STATISTICS

TO

MORAL AND ECONOMICAL QUESTIONS

READ AT THE MEETING OF THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION
HELD IN GLASGOW, SEPTEMBER, 1840.

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THERE are certain principles or general propositions, which may be truly affirmed of men and of human affairs—all of which have been learned, and can only be learned through the medium of particular observations. We are not called upon at present to lay down that process of the intellect, by which it is led onward from particulars to universals; or from special facts to general laws. Enough that we now advert to such a process, of which however we might remark, that some there are—men who, on the strength of their native sagacity alone, can carry it forward aright to its proper results and legitimate applications, unconscious of all aid either from rules of logic or a reflex metaphysics; or in other words, who can describe the process soundly and well and yet have taken no distinct notice, or far less could make any explicit narration, of its several footsteps. They somehow or other, can, in the act of looking to a complex phenomenon, discriminate the causal

from the casual—they can seize on the valid and essential principle, to the presence and operation of which some given effect is owing—they can set up that principle in the midst of some new combination; and confidently anticipate the same effect, although in circumstances which had never been all assembled together before. Now these men, after that they have proposed their scheme or even set it afoot; and after they have predicted the resulting consequence which was to ensue from it, but before the consequence is realized—in other words between their prophecy and its fulfilment—They stand in a very peculiar position to all others who have not studied the same lessons of life and character which they have done, and not made the same application of them. They have the faculty of analysis, by which to detect the essential causation which leads in one place, or amid one set of circumstantials, to a given result; and they have the faculty of synthesis, by which to transplant that causation into another place and among other circumstantials—where, proceeding on the constancy of Nature, they foretell the same or a similar result. Now how is it that they are regarded by the men who are incapable both of the analysis and of the synthesis which their minds have undergone —and, more especially, during the interval which takes place between the utterance of what they have foretold and the accomplishment of it? They are characterized as theorists. Their anticipations are branded as theoretical—and that by men who do not share in these anticipations, just because unmindful or unobservant of all former experience,

and incapable of profiting by its lessons. For you will observe, that the scheme, even at its first setting up, previous therefore to the working of it, and before any result can yet take place from its operation, may nevertheless be strictly an experimental one, and that because constructed on principles for the truth and efficacy of which we in past life have had the most abundant experience—just as the inventor of a new machine may have the utmost confidence in the effect which he predicts from it—not because he is the most sanguine of all theorists; but truly because he is the most studious of all experimentalists, or because of all his fellows he is the shrewdest and most diligent observer of Nature's laws. And as with a machine in the material, so may it be with a scheme in the moral world—devised we can suppose for the amelioration of human society, in some one of its departments. The scheme itself may never have been previously tried; but all the principles on which it is constructed, and which its author counts on for success, may have been abundantly tried. Such a scheme may never before have been put into operation; and therefore viewed as a whole, or in connexion with all its adjuncts and accessaries, it may be regarded as altogether new—and hence as requiring an after experience, ere we can make sure of the promised good which we expect to follow in its train. We do not object to this after experience, and consider the demand for it as altogether fair and reasonable, nay as necessary for the purpose of conclusively accrediting the scheme. Only, we would not have you

forget the beforehand experience which preceded the scheme, and guided its originator onward to the adoption of it. Its success may carry in it no instruction to him; for it may but exemplify the one or more principles, or general propositions, which suggested the scheme to his mind—and the truth of which principles or propositions may rest on the basis of a manifold experience. It may have been this experience in fact—a cautious, considerate, well-weighed experience—and not an ardent temperament at all, which both inspired and warranted his hope of a prosperous result. It might have been because, of all his fellows, he profited most by an experience which has been thrown away upon them; and while surrounded by critics and observers, who distrust and perhaps denounce him as an ambitious speculator, it may turn out after all—that he has proved the most submissive and patient disciple at the school of experience—the most respectful observer of her lessons.

But, quitting these generalities, we shall be more intelligible if we descend at once to particular illustrations. Let me instance then one experience, which, on the moment of its being intimated, will I think recommend itself as a familiar acquaintance, or as a sort of common and every-day finding which none can fail to recollect—so common, in fact, that the very utterance of it will be felt a commonplace, and which we should almost be ashamed to bring forward, were it not for its momentous applications. What we want, not to inform you of; for it cannot be a novelty to

any, but to remind you of—is the difference in point of effect when you wish to obtain the consent of others to any given proposal—the difference, we say, between your moving with it to them, and their moving for it to you. Lest we should be still too general, let me give you the example of your seeking to obtain the signatures of a town or neighbourhood for a parliamentary petition—what we desire to impress, is the much larger result if you go round with the petition from house to house, rather than leave it in some place of rendezvous whither all who will may find their own way to it. The former method is tenfold more prolific of names than the latter—for thousands there are who will not refuse their subscriptions to a document thus brought to their door, yet who would not move the distance of half a street for the purpose of appending their names to it. The principle is well understood by those agents of charity, who, in the capacity of district visitors, have now learned to ply every family with their periodic calls, in behalf of some philanthropic design; and find how much more productive it is, than leaving each to make his own call on some one, or on any number of receiving houses: And equally well understood by those aspirants in the walk of merchandise, who want either to create or to extend a business; and who, instead of waiting till customers shall come to them, go forth over their surrounding neighbourhoods—and whether by the specious advertisement sent across every threshold, or even by the urgency of a living voice brought to bear on the occupiers within, prosecute the

strenuous attempt either to find or to multiply customers. It is thus that the amount, either of liberality in the one case or of custom in the other, may be inconceivably augmented—for the carrying of which into effect, it is obvious that a locomotion is required; and the whole question is, on which side the locomotion should begin—whether on the side of him who wants to enlist another, or on the side of him who waits to be enlisted in a given arrangement. All sense, and all experience, declare in favour of the former; and there are many influences which might be alleged in explanation of its superior efficacy—not merely the influence of juxtaposition to overcome the obstacle, whether of short or long distances; and of the knowledge whereof many might have remained destitute, had they not been accosted by an information brought within our hearing—but the influence of one man's expressed wish over another man's pliant and practicable will, though yet neutral and in a state of indifferency—the power of entreaty, whether in the shape of simple desire brought to bear on the kindness, or of moral suasion brought to bear on the consciences of men—the power also of contiguous example, in virtue of which one man is carried more readily along in the stream of imitation, if made to know that next-door neighbours have already done the thing in which he is solicited to join them. All these taken together explain the mighty power, often of one single mind, to impress a gregarious movement in the same direction over a whole vicinity—what a French author whom I lately read, called the impulsion of individuals

upon masses in cases where nothing could have been effected but by a moving force made to operate *ab extra;* and nothing would have been effected in an aggregate of human beings, had all been abandoned to their own *vis inertiæ*, or each been left at random to take his own part in some given combination by a separate and spontaneous movement of his own.

But it is high time to enter on the detail of specific cases; and we hope that the first of these will not be thought less fitted to illustrate the principle and philosophy of our subject, that it happens to be of a strictly professional character —or that, because of its supreme moral and religious importance, its scientific importance will not therefore be overlooked. The little field or platform on which the experiment was made, and the subsequent experience was realized, is a small suburb district on the immediate confines of Edinburgh; and certainly at that time it formed not only one of the poorest, but one of the most profligate assemblages in or about the metropolis of Scotland. It consisted of 1356 human beings, all inhabitants of a place named the Water of Leith, and of two straggling hamlets each at the distance of a stone-throw or a little more from the main village. We undertook our ecclesiastical survey of its population, by which there could be ascertained at least one branch of its moral statistics; and found that not one for every nine of its whole number, or not a ninth part of its resident individuals were in the habit of attending any place of worship—leaving a fearful amount of

Sabbath idleness or profanation, which, as is well known to those who are conversant with the habitudes of the lower orders, forms the surest indication or earnest to all sorts of week-day profligacy. There were two ways in which one might have proceeded to operate on this mass of irreligion and consequent moral degeneracy. The first was to have built a church, and left the attendance on it to a gratuitous and unbidden volition on the part of the people themselves. This we felt to be altogether hopeless. We therefore took to the second way, which was to build a church; and, availing ourselves of the principle which has now been expounded, assign to its minister the task not merely of preaching on the seventh day, but of prosecuting his round of household visitations among the families of that district with its certain prescribed and definite boundaries by which it was surrounded. We never counted on a spontaneous forthgoing of the people to church; but rested all our hopes of success on the frequent and sustained forthgoing of the minister among the people. In a word, the essence of our experiment lay in this, that, instead of the people being left to seek, they were now to be sought after; or, to express it otherwise, the burden of the initial movement, instead of being laid as heretofore upon them, was transferred to another party—not on the recipients of the moral benefit, of whom we knew well, that they would never of their own accord go forth in quest of it, nay that though placed within their sight scarcely one would in the first instance choose to come for it; but on the dispenser of the

moral benefit, whose business it should be to make search and entry in every house that returned his approaches, and press it on the acceptance of all the families. And we counted beforehand on a prosperous result—for though we call it an experiment, we felt that, anterior to the experiment, we had a solid groundwork of experience on which to sustain our confidence. For over and above the general principle on which we have already expatiated, we knew the peculiar facilities which belonged to a minister of religion, on the strength of which he could pioneer his way through this moral wilderness; and, even among the rudest of nature's children, find an access for himself both to their hearts and to their homes. We knew that, even at the outset of this enterprise, the welcome which attended or rather which opened a way for his footsteps would be all but universal. We had read of the omnipotence of Christian kindness in prisons; and felt sure of the still stronger likelihood, that the very same experience would be verified in parishes. We believed, in spite of all that is figured by superficial observers to the contrary, that there was no substantial difference between the inhabitants of town and country—the same play of domestic affections—the same deeply seated instincts and sensibilities of a constitution, the stubborn identities of which were not to be obliterated or overborne by any change of situation or exposure—the same susceptibilities, and that even behind a front of seeming hardihood, the same susceptibilities of a softer nature when any touch or demonstration of kindness from without

was brought nigh to evoke them—the same gratitude for attentions to children—the same kindly response to the overtures, whether of a weekday education for their young, or of a religious education on the Sabbath both for themselves and for their families—the same visitation of seriousness on their spirits, when death entered within their threshold and tore away with rude hand the dearest of its inmates—Above all, the same reverential affection for that man of God, who, by his frequent presence lighted up the scene of distress, and shed over its dying bed the halo of his sympathies and his prayers. We did, notwithstanding the frightful pictures which are given of a city, as if wholly dissimilar and distinct from a country population, we did calculate—and not on the strength of a sanguine imagination, as some who now listen to our description may perhaps be ready to conceive, but on the strength of repeated and hard-won experience—we did calculate on the same moral results, if only the same moral regimen were brought to bear with equal degrees of vigour and constancy on both. And accordingly, though charged as we have been with luxuriating all our days among the visions of Utopia, we did venture to predict—that if a man not of gigantic but of ordinary dimensions, for we have no taste and no value for anomalies—and not by dint of incessant labour which few would undertake, but of certain plain and practicable assiduities which are competent to all—if such a man, giving up a certain portion of his strength and his time to the task, would but charge himself with some manage-

able hundreds of these neglected outcasts, and never by any persuasion be induced to accept of more than two thousand of them: But if on such a limited field as I have now prescribed for him, if he would enter every house; and make his periodic inquiries of kindness at every family; and be on the alert at every call of distress; and strike in on every occasion when either the alarms of conscience, or the solemnities of an approaching dissolution, opened a wide and welcome door for the message of the gospel; and, by his presence at every funeral, at once dignify and gladden each group of plebeian mourners who had assembled to carry a neighbour to his grave; and, to sum up all, let him be furnished with such means and facilities as might enable him to offer, we do not say relief to their poverty—that is a distinct object, and which will be taken up afterwards—but to offer and on easy terms a remedy for their ignorance, the scholarship of letters for the young at a weekday seminary within reach of all; and the scholarship of religion from his own lips on the Sabbath, and to which he invites the attendance especially of those who had hitherto been strangers to the habits and the decencies of a Christian land—Let all this be done, and it has been our confident averment for years—that on the strength of these simple Christian attentions, reiterated and concentred on the people of a given locality, and where the minister was not exposed to the distractions of a general congregation from all parts of the city—He in a very few months, would obtain the same ascendancy for good in the most putrid

lanes of a metropolis, that is realized by the village pastor with a church embosomed in foliage, and beset on all sides by peaceful and smiling landscapes. Utopianism! Pray who are the Utopians?—They who, in the unwearied rounds of their daily experience, encounter the homebred realities of life in the worst alleys of a town, and tell us on the result of their own findings there, that human nature both in its propensities to evil and its capacities for good is of the same staple all the world over; or they who descant on the hopeless and impracticable difference between our urban and our rural populations—and, like children of sweetest poesy, imagine that, because the scenery of fields and woods and whitewashed cottages is so much finer than the noisome smoke of manufactories with the din of their ringing anvils in the suburb streets and among the hovels of the working families which belong to them—therefore picture forth to the eye of their minds a corresponding diversity in the character of their living occupiers; forgetting all the while, that it may be just as imaginative to look for nothing in the one locality but humanity in all its rudest and most revolting forms—as to conceive of the other, that, because lapped in beauty and fanned by the pure air of heaven, we must therefore look for a people of another race, the simple-minded patriarchs and happy swains of Arcadia.

But let us remember that it is with science, not with sentiment whether just or extravagant, that in this place we have properly to do; and we therefore proceed to exhibit the credentials of our

argument, which, we think in the present instance, approximate very nearly if they do not reach altogether the precision of strict mathematics.

The field of our enterprise then was a contiguous population of 1356, of the very humblest rank in society, consisting of carters and quarrymen and pig-feeders—where not one in nine were in the habit of going to any place of worship whatever; and of whom we wanted to ascertain in how far they were reclaimable to the good old Sabbath observation, as the surest step or precursor of their return to the sobrieties and the regularities and the everyday virtues of our Scottish forefathers.

We had no hope of any prosperous result whatever from the mere juxtaposition of a chapel, though erected in the midst of them, and made to send forth in the hearing of the villagers the intimation of its coming services. Yet we behoved to provide ourselves with some such apparatus—though the only substitute we could get for a sacred edifice was an old malt-barn into which four hundred human beings were capable of being squeezed; and which, moreover, we equipped outside with a second-hand manufactory bell, in no way remarkable either for melody or power, but which yet could make itself be heard throughout all the dwelling-places of a small and compact population.

But we knew well that however audible the summons, it were of itself but a voice in the wilderness—wasting its sweetness in the desert air; and calling forth no response from the sluggish

and lethargic mass over which it verberated. We knew that the *vis inertiæ* of the people had to be operated upon in another way, and that as in physics, a force *ab extra* adequate to move and to impel must be brought to bear upon them. We knew that to evoke any reaction from the living mass, it must be acted upon by a living agency; and accordingly in the very earliest and most rudimental stage of our undertaking, while it was yet in embryo, and to call forth the first heavings of a multitude sunk in settled and deep ungodliness—there behoved to go forth, and to move in busy circulation throughout all the recesses of this deep and dark interior, one endowed with the voice and the heart and the intelligence and all those feelings of brotherhood, which tell so powerfully in the way of suasion and sympathetic impulse between man and man. I will not tell over again the encouragement which hailed even the initial footsteps of our missionary—whose business it was to preach or to officiate as a minister on the Sabbath, and to ply the families of his assigned district with all the attentions of Christian kindness, or to officiate amongst them as a pastor through the week. I have not time to explain how admirably and efficiently it is, that these two offices conjoined in the same person, and discharged by him towards the contiguous population of one and the same locality—how powerfully and how wholesomely it is that they work to each other's hands. Suffice it to say that it gives rise to what may be termed a reciprocating movement between his weekday attentions and their Sabbath attendance. But it

is of capital importance to understand that the whole charm and efficacy of the operation depend on the first movement being laid on the right party—that is on the minister, and not on the people. In the order of cause and effect, it is he in the first instance, who, in the course of his itinerancies from door to door, opens every house and finds his way to many hearts; and they, in grateful response for his assiduities and Christian services, come back upon him on the Sabbath; and so fulfil what has now become an adage I understand in the mouths of our city philanthropists—that a house-going minister creates a church-going people. But I must now hasten forward from a description of the process, to a statement of the result. The malt-barn was, in the course of a very few months, filled first to compression, and then to an overflow—and that mainly by the very families, the reckless misthriven outlandish families for whom it was intended. Men and women, young and old, returned to the habit which had perhaps been extinct among them for one or two generations; and, as the fruit of his benevolent and devoted labours, did this painstaking missionary earn for himself the proud achievement of a local or parochial congregation, made up of the rudest and most neglected of nature's children.

We now come to our statistics. In the spring of 1836, the Royal Commissioners on the question of Religious Instruction in Scotland sat in Edinburgh—when, previous to offering myself for examination, a little survey was commenced and

carried through, having for its special object to ascertain with numerical precision the success of this our peculiar method for recruiting an incipient church from a territory of aliens. We deemed it a signal advantage, that, in our immediate neighbourhood, not more than a few stone-throws from the eastern limit of our own selected vineyard, there stood another place of worship, open to the ingress of our population for many more years than our malt-barn had been for months, but open alike to all parts of the town, (the minister having no charge or cognizance of any territory out of doors); and therefore left to be filled, as I am sorry to say almost all city churches or chapels still are, at the spontaneous choice of hearers, who must therefore have a predisposition for the services of Christianity—a predisposition which does not exist, among the thousands and tens of thousands in the first second and third-rate towns of our empire who have lapsed into heathenism. The precise distinction between our missionary and the clerical neighbour who was nearest to him lay in this—That whereas, for the purpose of bringing a minister and a people together—in the former case the first movement was made by him, in the latter case the first movement was made by them; and the precise object of our statistical investigation was to determine the distinct results of these two very distinct processes. Accordingly, we caused entry to be made into every house of our own locality; and our first question to each was, How many of that household attended the malt-barn, our second, How many attended the handsome and

commodious place of worship that was nearest to it. The sums total of the two returns astonished even ourselves. The malt-barn had in a few months gathered from the locality in question 364 regular hearers. The chapel again had not for the same or a greater number of years, drawn more than five. The one, with a missionary going forth through the week amongst its dwelling-places, may be said to have proceeded by the method of aggression; the other, trusting to the mere effect of the Sabbath services on the same population, may be said to have proceeded on the method of attraction. Here then, to speak mathematically, are two forces, and to borrow another term from the phraseology of the exact sciences, here are two forces in moral dynamics; and where the ratio of the first to the second can be given with all the accuracy of a numerical expression. The force of aggression is to the force of attraction as 364 to 5, or as nearly as may be 73 to 1, which gives an overpassing superiority to the aggressive principle—a most important law, and the practical value of which cannot be too highly estimated—seeing that, although other methods may retard the decline of virtue in a commonwealth; by this method, and by this alone, can we hope to recover a population from the degeneracy into which they have fallen. To the antiseptic property of being a preserver of moral health, which other appliances might have though in a far less degree, it adds the property which is all its own of being a restorative.

Before proceeding to other instances, let me

here interpose a few brief remarks on the benefit of statistics.

First—by subjecting, when possible, every process for the amelioration of society to the touchstone of actual numbers, you put a conclusive stamp on the amount, whatever it may be, of the real worth and soundness which belong to it. No scheme however shrewdly it may have been devised, or whatever be the seeming strength of that antecedent experience on which it rests or by which it may have been suggested, may claim to be exempted from this ordeal—either to accredit its solid wisdom, or otherwise to detect and make it manifest that there is a vitiating flaw in the whole speculation.

Second—such a verification of the scheme as this may often be the only way, by which to convince many, perhaps the great majority of men, of its experimental character—able to comprehend results, yet unable to comprehend processes. Its projector may have been qualified for his discovery, just because signalized above all his fellows both for the practice and the philosophy of observation—Yet meanwhile, or till tested and made palpable by statistics, he must be content to have his invention stigmatized as theory, that most convenient and often most senseless of all by-words, by men too as little able to penetrate the inner laboratory of nature or discern there the working of those principles which lead to a visible fulfilment, as they are able to explore the mechanism or trace the evolutions of Mr Babbage's calculating machine, while abundantly able to read off the

numbers which cast up by the operation of it. This last they can do, and perhaps little or nothing more.

Third—the statistics which furnish a measure for the intensity or the regularity of certain moral forces that operate and are of influence in human affairs, may at length give to certain moral and economical subjects a near approximation to the exactitude, and precision, and certainty of mathematics. This consideration, if well weighed, may perhaps reconcile and satisfy those gentlemen of the physical departments, who felt a difficulty in admitting our Statistical Section within the scheme of the British Association. Not that the essential distinction between the moral and the mathematical can ever be obliterated, any more than in mathematics itself we can obliterate the essential distinction between geometry and algebra. It is now forty years since I heard Professor Robison of Edinburgh, all whose tastes and preferences were on the side of geometry, state, and felicitously state, in behalf of this his more favourite method of investigation, that so long as the mind was engaged in it, it was in more direct and immediate contact with what he expressively termed the *ipsa corpora* of the subject—whereas in algebra, while he did all homage to the latter as being the more powerful instrument of research and discovery, after that lines were committed to symbols, the thinking principle had no more to do with the real and original elements of the question; but losing sight of these, had only to do with certain artificial and representative characters in the man-

agement and transformation of which it was altogether occupied. Now certain it is that they are only the observers of life and character who hold sensible commerce with the *ipsa corpora* of our department—the principles or the phenomena of human nature; and that the mere statists are only taken up with the resulting numbers which come forth of the working of these in communities of assembled men. Nevertheless, in the tables of the statist, as well as in the formulæ of the analyst, we may have correct exhibition of objective realities in the external world—a rigorous expression, in the one case, of things in the world of motion and inanimate matter; an accurate registration in the other, of things in the region of human society.

Fourth—in further recommendation of our theme, and which indeed I hold to be its prime recommendation, let me bid you ponder well the distinction between the statistics of a small territory, and the general sketch or state of a large one; or between your thorough minute microscopic acquaintance with but the segment of a field, and your wider but necessarily on that account your more superficial view of the whole. It is this which so enamours me with the business of our special department—that when compared with those surveys which are given in authorship to the public, of the state of the world, or the state of a continent, or the state of a country, or even the state of a single city—I believe that a deeper insight is often to be gained into the principle and philosophy of many questions in the economics of society, from the statistics of a single parish, a

single street, often a single household or family. I feel that the farther down you carry this subdivision, the more intense must be your study of the last and the least portion to which you have arrived, and the nearer you come to the infinitesimals or so to speak the corpusculars of your subject; and so a profounder wisdom might thence be gathered, and a more searching penetration effected into the essence or else hidden and interior nature of things—just as from the treatment of little specimens in Chemistry, as a bit of chalk or the merest handful of earth or salt or charcoal, along with a close and diligent inspection of the results, there might be evolved laws in nature, of the widest possible extent and most beneficial operation. The man whose eyes, like those of Solomon's fool, are on all the ends of the earth, may prize the dazzling outlines of a great and magnificent panorama; but it is only on the basis of patient and skilful observation, patient of all drudgeries and cognizant of all details, that a science of firm substratum or stable endurance can be raised.

But lastly—there is one special reason why, in the present style and temper of our age—I desiderate statistics, in the elucidation of all those questions which bear on the economic comfort, and still more on the present reform and future amelioration of the species. It is difficult to handle these topics at all, without betraying a certain sympathy and felt interest in the concerns and fortunes of the human family; but mark the instant effect which the betrayal of any such emotion has, in lighting up a leer of incredulity, if not of con-

tempt, on the faces of our hard and heartless utilitarians. They have altogether disjoined and isolated from each other, the intellectual from the moral and the emotional faculties of our nature—as if the perceptions of a man's understanding, and the sensibilities of his heart, could not be in play at the same instant. And accordingly on the moment that a man begins to feel, he in their estimation ceases to discern. For their sakes therefore, and as they seem to hold that science and sentiment are incompatible with each other, I think it most desirable, not certainly to suppress the one, but to make full acquittal of our pretensions to the other: And seeing that they are disposed to regard with suspicion all the effusions of an ardent philanthropy, as if they were mere fancies or figures of speech—I would provide, and in abundant supply, the only others which they seem to care for—the figures of arithmetic. This, it would appear, is the only demonstration to their liking—the osteology of a bald, numerical, naked skeleton. I should imagine that they had a marvellous preference for dried specimens; and that the freshness of a living subject was utterly distasteful to them. Though they have greatly increased of late years, yet they are not altogether new to the world, nor quite peculiar to the generation in which we live—for, in the age immediately before us, we can descry their genuine predecessors, of altogether their own likeness, in those members of the British Parliament, whose constant practice it was to leave the House on the moment that Edmund Burke commenced one of

his elaborate demonstrations—under the conception I presume, that because there was so much brilliancy on the surface, there was therefore no substratum of wisdom or philosophy beneath. They have broken up the association between two ideas, which, in the finer and juster apprehension of the ancient Greeks, were so implicated together, or rather so identified, that in their language one and the same word was expressive of either or of both. The το καλον was significant of truth or of beauty, or of the two together—whereas it seems to be almost a category with these modern philosophers that nothing can be true which is beautiful, and nothing can be beautiful which is true. May the statists of the British Association fully awake to the charms of the one, and to the paramount claims of the other—erect to their honour a common shrine, at which they may yield a conjunct affection, and vindicate the high prerogatives of both.

But let me proceed to other instances of the good of statistics, for the determination of moral and economical questions—with one sentence more however, on that case of a more professional character than any of the others, which I have already given.

When in London in the summer of 1837, I waited on the Marquis of Lansdowne; and, aware of his taste and talent for statistics, I presented him with the results of the survey which I have now explained to you; and more especially directed his attention to the arithmetical test, by which we could measure and ascertain the effect of this our

peculiar method of territorial cultivation. The proportion of church-goers in the given locality was less than one in nine; and I put the supposition, that, by so many months or years of perseverance in the operations of the aggressive system, it should become one in three—commenting at the same time on the improvement of character and habit, which such a change would imply. It gives me pleasure to think that the proportion now is still more favourable; and though it ought at least to be one in two or the half of the whole population, of which proportion it still comes short from a barrier which though removeable is not yet removed. On this point we cannot at present explain ourselves; but we rejoice in the evidence that we have already gathered, and of a strictly experimental character, as warranting the confidence we feel—that, on certain obstacles being removed, a patent way will lie before us, for carrying that best and highest of all education, the education of principle, down to the humblest and onward to the lowest of the people.

There are fifteen similar enterprises to the one I have now described in and about Glasgow, and upwards of one hundred and fifty now going on in the whole of Scotland. I do hope that, as one fruit of the visits from the British Association by which our country has been honoured, the numerical results of the success which has been earned in many of our localities will be prepared and transmitted on every future year—sure, I am confident, of a respectful welcome from those enlightened men, who will not deem it unworthy of a place in their

repositories, and among their other accumulated treasures—that they should have the statistics of reform, or of the people's moral amelioration; as well as the statistics of crime, or the statistics of disease, or the statistics of mortality, or the statistics of pauperism.

There is one fact more in regard to the Water of Leith which I earnestly recommend to the attention of general educationists. A weekday school was provided for this district of 1356 people, where, in virtue of the monitorial system, between two and three hundred could be admitted without injury to the scholarship of the learners. It was intimated from the pulpit on the Sabbath, and filled *per saltum*—so that more than the Prussian proportion, more than one in seven of the population were assembled at a primary school, and that from a community of the poorest of the poor. It is to the virtue of the local and aggressive system that I would give the credit of this result—for the notice and recommendation were given by the missionary, and came with weight from his lips, because of the general confidence which he had earned by his frequent and familiar movements among the families.

But let me now quit these experiments in Edinburgh, for a few cases and experiences in Glasgow.

In illustration of my fourth general remark on the subdivision of the territory, upon which either processes are instituted or observations are made, I would mention, that, so far back as 1816, I made a single parish the subject of no less than forty dis-

tinct and independent operations—each carried forward in a small and separate district of its own. A parish of 11,000 people was broken up into a congeries of Sabbath-schools on the local principle—the efficacy of which altogether turns on the difference between seeking and being sought after. To every teacher were assigned about fifty contiguous households; and his business was to go round and solicit the attendance of the children. When left to themselves, as they were under the general system, I am confident that not more than a hundred from the whole parish attended Sabbath-schools. Under the aggressive operations which we had instituted, the yield amounted to fully 1200 of our juvenile population—an experience which naturally led to a transition in our thoughts from a model to a machine, or from a thing in miniature to a thing in bulk. We see no difference between the case of Sabbath evening schools for the young, and the case of churches which are Sabbath-day schools for the community at large, or people of all ages; and it is our conviction, more and more rivetted by the observations of every year, that an operation at once territorial and aggressive forms the only tactics by which to reclaim *en masse*, or to work with aught like general and sensible effect on the aggregates of a city population.

I have now to record another experience which I hold in great value, as a beautiful exemplification of the same principle. The same local and aggressive system which I found so productive of scholars, both in Sabbath and common weekday seminaries—I tried with equal success in the institution of little

home sewing-schools for girls. This species of education is peculiarly called for in Glasgow, and all similar manufacturing towns—where many of the young are transplanted at a very early age into the public works, and without availing themselves even of the briefest interval for obtaining an acquirement of such importance to good housewifery; and the consequence is, a general ill-conditionedness among that class of families in respect of clothing, due it is well known to the incapacity of the mothers for any sort of needle-work. To remedy this, we determined to provide them with an opportunity; and, true to the principle of laying the right initial movement on the right party, instead of waiting till they should take advantage of it, to press it on the attention of all. A very simple machinery sufficed for the accomplishment of our object. We calculated, that, as the lessons of a single year might do for the elements of plain sewing, there could not be so many as one in fifty attending at a time on this branch of education, confined as it was to one sex—at which rate half a dozen small household seminaries, with an attendance of thirty on each, would meet the demands of a population of nine thousand. For the completion of this arrangement, we succeeded in getting as many decent female householders, to undertake for a salary of five pounds a-year and the weekly payment of twopence from each of the pupils, that they would receive into their own houses, all of their own vicinity who might require this education at their hand. The salary in each in-

stance was made out by the contributions of five ladies, who visited both the schools and the families to which the scholars belonged. One most important practice in these little institutions, was that each pupil in turn should take charge of the apartment in which they met, and keep it in right order, after which they were expected to do the same in their own houses—a practice carried by them into visible effect, and so as to humanize, in a way that was quite noticeable, the aspect of their own homes. I look back with the greatest pleasure to this experience—for never was there an operation so thoroughly pervading. The yield of scholars exceeded our previous computations; and whether I looked to the improvement in the appearance of the girls and change for the better of their domestic habits which ensued from it, or to the recognitions which took place between the visitors and their young charge when they met on the pavement and exchanged the notices of cordial acquaintanceship with each other, I could not but feel the vast importance of a well-directed agency of ladies for speeding on the work of civilization, even among the most ungainly of our city multitudes. With the growing benevolence of the age, the growing interest that is felt in the fortunes and families of the working classes, it needs but a thorough subdivision of the territory, that each may have a task put into his hands which he can thoroughly overtake—to redeem the consequences, I will not say of past mismanagement, but mainly of past heedlessness and inattention, to the state

both as to comfort and character of our heretofore neglected population.

The readings subsequent to this were on the subject of Glasgow pauperism, which in the fourth section of our treatise on the Sufficiency of the Parochial System, have already been presented to the reader in a more expanded form.

ESSAY READ BEFORE THE ROYAL INSTITUTE OF FRANCE.

DISTINCTION,

BOTH

IN PRINCIPLE AND EFFECT

BETWEEN

A LEGAL CHARITY FOR THE RELIEF OF INDIGENCE,

AND

A LEGAL CHARITY FOR THE RELIEF OF DISEASE.

1. It had been good for the well-being of states, if legislation had at all times kept within its own proper boundaries—whereas, by stepping beyond these, it has often marred the interest which it meant to provide for, and inflicted a sore distemper on human society. This has nowhere been more strikingly exemplified, and in a way more instructive to the governments of other countries, than by the Poor-law of England.

2. We often hear of the wisdom of nature, as evinced in the laws and adaptations of the material world; but the same wisdom may be as visibly discerned in the frame and principles of our mental constitution—the spontaneous working of which often leads to a far better result, than all the skill and vigilance of statesmen can possibly effectuate. A commerce which results from the free enterprise of individuals, each devising and labouring for his own special advantage, is greatly more flourishing and more conducive to the real pros-

perity of a kingdom, than a commerce which is nourished by the bounties, and at the same time guided by the regulations of the Statute-book. The whole of political economy bears evidence to the perfection of what may be termed the natural system of human industry and human exchanges—in opposition to the artificial system, that, whether in the form of encouragements or restraints, acts with all the mischievous influence of a disturbing force on the operations of a previous and better mechanism.

3. One of the most interesting verifications of this remark may be seen in the history of pauperism. It is quite palpable that nature has at least made some provision in the very make and constitution of humanity, for the alleviation, often prevention, of the ills of extreme want. It, in the first place, has endowed man with a strong and urgent principle of self-preservation, and has superadded the goading agonies of hunger to the fear of perishing—so as to afford the most powerful stimulus that can well be imagined, for the utmost possible exertion to secure an adequate and regular supply of food. In the second place, it has implanted a strong relative affection, as that of parents to children, of children back again to parents, even of more distant kindred for each other —so as to enlist the energies of all the effective members in a household, for the maintenance, not of themselves only, but of the most weak and helpless under their own roof; and, over and above this, so as often to prompt them to the large assistance of those, who, though beyond the limits of the

home in which they live, are yet of the same blood and family. But there is a third principle, and from which it is obvious that nature meant the kindness of man for man to extend over a wider field of operation than within the circle of the same relationship—the principle of compassion, that powerful impellent to deeds of generosity; and in virtue of which, it is nearly as intolerable for one man to see another in the agonies of hunger, as to be the victim of these agonies himself. This opens up two resources for the relief of poverty—First the kindness of poor to poor, or rather of immediate neighbours for each other, living in the same vicinity and occupying nearly the same level on the ground-floor of society—Secondly the kindness of rich to poor, which we place last in the enumeration; because truly we regard it as the least powerful and the least prolific of the whole—believing as we do, that, in the principle of self-preservation whereby each man is led to care for himself, and the principle of relative affection whereby each man is led to care for those of his own kindred, and the principle of compassion whereby each man is led to care for those of his own acquaintance or neighbourhood who have fallen into distress, we behold the most important of nature's ordinations—first for the prevention, and then for the relief, of extreme want and wretchedness in the world.

4. But, to make our reasoning still more distinct and conclusive, we shall attempt to demonstrate of each of these principles, separately and in order, that in respect of beneficial operation,

each is so injured and enfeebled by the hurtful influence of a public charity for the relief of indigence—as altogether to have greatly deteriorated the condition of the poor and working classes, in every neighbourhood where such a provision has been established.

5. And first then it is obvious, that a law by the state, of public and proclaimed charity for the relief of indigence, must slacken the operation of what has been termed the strongest law of nature —even the law of self-preservation. It tends to supersede the care and industry, which, but for its own mischievous and seducing influence, a man might have otherwise put forth—in labouring to realize a sufficiency for himself and for his children. It is a law of exemption from toil, from prudence, from foresight and economy, from every restraint on the gratifications of present and powerful appetite; and from all those busy expedients wherewith a man, who is left to depend on himself, devises for the security or the advancement of his own condition in the world. A man feels discharged from all strenuousness or self-denial, when the care of his own subsistence is thus taken out of his hands; and the state undertakes to do for him that which, but for its interference, he would infallibly and in obedience to the calls of hunger and necessity have otherwise done for himself. A universal guarantee against starvation, operates towards a universal relaxation of industry and providential habits among the families of a land. A man will not accumulate of his savings against the evil day, if that day have already been provided

for by the institutions of his country. He is thus tempted to idleness, nay tempted either to profligacy or premature marriage, by the expenses of which he is no longer deterred—when these expenses are shifted from himself to a public and compulsory fund, raised for all sorts of destitution, in whatever way that destitution may have been formed. It is thus that many a single parish in England holds forth in miniature the example of an over-peopled world. It labours and is in distress from the redundancy of its own numbers; and whether this excess proceeds from the number of illegitimate births, or from the regular family births of too early and too frequent marriages—certain it is, that there are thousands of parochial communities in England, where the overplus of labourers has effected an unnatural reduction of price in the labour market—so as to have inflicted a sore and general degradation on the circumstances of the working classes. It is thus that the Poor-law of England has created far more of want and wretchedness than it can by any possibility relieve; or, in other words, a law in the constitution of the country, by superseding a wiser and better law in the constitution of human nature, has depressed the condition of the lower orders in society, and aggravated tenfold the poverty which it had vainly proposed to do away

6. But secondly, there is another law, inserted by the hand of Nature in the mechanism of our constitution; and which, when left undisturbed to its own proper direction and force, goes far to alleviate the ills of poverty, we mean the law of rela-

tive or family affection—as of parents to children, of children back again to parents, of brothers and sisters to each other; and even of more distant members in the same circle of relationship. And, beside this, there is a certain sentiment of pride which comes in aid of the more intense kindness that operates within the limits of a common household, or, more extended still, of a common kindred, though parted into separate domestic establishments, and in virtue of which many a sacrifice is made to support and to save each other from the degradations of charity, so long as charity is not legalised. But both affection and honour give way, before the temptations of a public and authorized provision for the relief of indigence; and accordingly in England, under its late and still under its present parochial economy, there do occur the most scandalous desertions of very near relatives, and which, by the force of habit and under the countenance of general example, have ceased to be scandalous there. Aged parents, instead of being taken into the houses of their children now advanced to manhood and in a state of sufficiency for supporting those to whom they owe their birth, are abandoned for life to the cheerless imprisonment of a Poors-house; and on the other hand, parents, in the full vigour of manhood and the natural protectors of their own families, have been tempted in hundreds perhaps in thousands every year to abscond from their dwellings, and leave all the inmates to the charity of the parish bound by law to provide for them. We have counted in one newspaper no less than forty advertisements of

runaway husbands from the town of Manchester, who had left their families on the parish fund, and for the discovery and apprehension of whom a reward was offered by the managers. This unnatural desertion of their own kinsfolk is the epidemic vice of England—only, however, because a legal guarantee against the starvation of those who are thus deserted is its epidemic temptation. It is in striking contrast with the general habit of Scotland, in the great majority of whose parishes such a guarantee is practically unknown; and where, almost universally, such an abandonment, either of parents by their own children or of children by their own parents, would, as a thing of exceeding rare occurrence, be deemed a monstrous exception to the most binding duties, the most sacred proprieties of Christian and humanized life. We have already considered the effect of a law of pauperism, in releasing man from the duties which he owes to himself. Its effect in releasing him from the duties which he owes to those of his own relationship, is no less obvious. In both instances, it directly tends to multiply the number of paupers, and, great as this economic evil is, it is surpassed by the moral evil of a system, under which the sustenance of man is made independent of his own virtue and prudence; and the sustenance even of his nearest relatives is alike independent of those parental and filial affections, which are nature's strongest securities for the maintenance and uprearing of successive families in the world. Surely better than to have thus counteracted such urgent and universal principles as these, would it

have been that the hand of power had not interfered with them; but leaving them to their own native and spontaneous operation, that legislation had kept within her own rightful province, and let the business of charity alone.

7. But thirdly, beside the strong feeling of relative affection between men and men of the same kindred, Nature hath established another guarantee against the ills of extreme want; and another feeling strong too and of wider operation than the former, we mean the feeling of compassion—of which all might be the objects; but which acts with peculiar force and great practical effect, between men and men of the same neighbourhood. And so it is not to be told how much is given and received throughout the families, even of the poorest localities, by the internal operation of charity amongst themselves. It is true that the contributions of each might be individually small, but this is made up for by their number and constancy. It is quite palpable, even on the most cursory observation, how mutually helpful, by personal service and attendance, they are to each other, in seasons of sickness; but it requires much intercourse, and a very intimate acquaintance with the habitudes of the poor who are congregated together in the same community, to be made sure of their great mutual generosity, in imparting, from their own scanty share of the necessaries of life, to the naked and the hungry, and the members whether young or old of those bereaved households whom the hand of death has deprived of their parents or natural protectors. Such,

nevertheless, is the actual finding of all who have given themselves to the business of observation on this most interesting walk. The Reverend Mr Carlyle of Dublin informs me, that he can depone, from his minute and statistical acquaintance with one of the poorest sections in the city of Dublin—that the amount given and received by the operation of a charity purely internal, or which reciprocates between the families of the district, exceeds all computation. This fully accords with my own experience, when minister in Glasgow, where I had a parish of ten thousand people, the poorest of the poor; and where, from instances too numerous to be mentioned, I learned the delightful lesson—that the spontaneous charity of neighbours for each other was a more certain as well as more abundant source of relief, in cases of extreme indigence, than that legal charity, by which, when in full operation, the other is wellnigh superseded. Never did a case occur without the most timely forthgoings of aid and sympathy from the immediate neighbours—insomuch that I have often expressed it as my confidence, that, if surrounded by human eyes and human ears, I had no fear of human feelings being also awakened, so as to make it a moral impossibility that any man should starve in the sight of his fellows. Perhaps the most vivid illustration of this cheering truth in the history of our nature is to be gathered from Buxton's Tour through the Prisons of Great Britain. The legal allowance of bread to the prisoners varies at different places. In Bristol it was below the par of human subsistence. The allow-

ance was too small for the criminals; and for the debtors there was no allowance at all. The prisoners of the latter class, therefore, are left, either to the assistance of their friends or to the charity of the public. But it occasionally happened, that both these resources failed them—when they would have inevitably perished of hunger but for the generosity of the criminals, who, rather than brook the spectacle of a fellow-creature suffering under one of the sorest agonies of nature, shared their own scanty pittance along with them. This I hold to be one of the finest examples which can be quoted of the strength of human compassion—proving that it survives the depraving process which conducts a criminal to his cell. We have only to carry back this experience from prisons to parishes, in order to be convinced of the safety, wherewith the evils of extreme want might generally be left to the workings of individual sympathy in every neighbourhood where they occur. If a man in the agonies of hunger, and giving authentic tokens of this sore distress, be within sight and hearing of his fellows—then, by an urgent and irrepressible law of nature, do they feel the promptings of a desire to relieve him which they are unable to resist. But not if a law of the state have ordained its own prescribed and authoritative method of relieving. Such a law has practically the effect of absolving every man from the obligation of caring for his neighbours; and by laying its arrest on a thousand rills of beneficence, which would else have flowed in refreshing and kindly circulation throughout the mass of society, it has shut

far more copious and effective sources of relief for human wretchedness than itself can open.

8. The arrest thus laid on the popular habit of mutual service and sympathy between poor and poor, will prove a far greater loss to the destitute than can be possibly made up to them by all the dispensations of legal charity. The spontaneous offerings of private benevolence will be sadly abridged—because men naturally feel themselves released from the care of all the want and suffering around them, when made to understand that the State has taken that care upon themselves. Those of the same rank with the dependent and the needy keep back from the work of relief, because of an imagined sufficiency in the law which meanwhile is never realized. Those of a higher rank, the wealthy on whom the burden of the compulsory provision is laid, have an additional reason for their insensibility to the calls of distress. It is not merely that their forced contributions to the Poor-rate supersede, in their own minds, the obligation of any further, or free-will offering. But the truth is, that the whole effect of such an artificial system of charity is to banish from its ministrations all the better and kindlier feelings of our nature. What is given by the ordination of law is given without good-will; and what is received by the same ordination is received without gratitude. That, which ought at all times to have been a thing of love, is transformed into a thing of fierce and fiery litigation. The clear and right proceeding in the management of our nature—were to leave to justice the things of

justice, and to humanity the things of humanity. But the first has been made to usurp the province of the second; and in the confusion of these two moral elements, which should have ever been kept distinct from each other, the one party have been led to demand what they ought to have supplicated; and the other party, in the attitude of defensive jealousy, stoutly to withhold what in the exercise of an enforced compassion they would freely and willingly have given. This will account for the state of mutual exasperation which obtained, and which recent changes have for a time at least only inflamed the more, between the paupers and the proprietors of England; and the loss to a great extent of their spontaneous liberality must be added to the other and still larger privations, which, under the guise of kindness, the law of a compulsory provision for the poor has entailed on the victims of its folly.

9. Shortly then to recapitulate the four causes of deterioration in the comforts of the poor, which the allowances of no public charity can by any possibility countervail—we refer once more—First, to the augmenting improvidence and idleness which are generated by the system—Secondly, to the reduction which it effects on that mutual kindness, which, in a natural state of things, obtains between those of the same kindred—Thirdly, to a similar reduction made by it on those interchanges of sympathy and aid, which take place among the poor themselves of the same neighbourhood, when the laws of their country do not contravene the laws and tendencies of their own

moral nature—and Lastly, the alienation which it begets of the rich from the poor, whom it arrays into two hostile parties against each other—the one fiercely clamouring for those imagined rights, of which they never would have dreamed, had not this perverse and mischievous law of pauperism inspired the notion of them; and the other party as fiercely resisting the encroachments on their property of that popular demand, which they fear will be ever increasing and never satisfied. We are not to wonder, that, with such powerful counteractions, the number of poor is found greatly to outstrip the provision which is made for them; and that a law which carries in it an aspect of munificence to the lower orders of society, has in truth depressed their condition, and aggravated the evils which it meant to remedy or alleviate.

10. It would detain us too long from the main subject of this essay, did we say all that is important to be noticed or known, respecting the utter powerlessness of law—if it proceed in the way of a public and positive administration of relief, even to abridge, and far less to do away with the indigence of the land. But we cannot omit to assign a great master reason, why the consequence of such a law is the very opposite of this—so that, instead of abridging, it is sure not only to multiply the wants of the poor; but to effect a great and general deterioration in the circumstances of the working classes at large. We advert to the undoubted stimulus, which a poor-law gives to population—both adding to the frequency and the precipitation of marriages; and thereby causing, not

only a greater number of families, but of larger families than before. It is thus that the market for labour comes to be overstocked, and the sure effect of this over proportion of labourers is the under price of labour. The greater the number of workmen the smaller must be the wages; and it gives a fearful aggravation to this mischief, that a very small addition to the number of labourers, creates a very great reduction in the wages which are paid to them. Let there be but the excess of one twentieth in the quantity of labour; and we mistake the consequence, if we think that there will be only the fall of one twentieth in the remuneration which is made to it. Even so few as a twentieth part of the whole number, unemployed, and soliciting admission in the places already occupied and full by those who have gone before them, would create so intense a competition throughout the general body of workmen as might bring down wages one-fourth, one-third, or even one-half, of what they might be, were the number of human beings in no more than equal proportion to the demand for their industry. It is thus that the whole body of the common people suffer a general and severe depression even from a slight redundancy in their numbers; and legislation is sure to find itself embarked in a vain enterprise, when it attempts to overtake this constantly increasing destitution, by a larger dispensation of charity than before. In an economy of legalized pauperism, the necessities and the demands ever multiply beyond the supplies—as in England, where the gigantic expenditure of eight millions was lavished on the relief of

that poverty which its own system may be said to have created; and where, in many of its parishes, the sum necessary for the maintenance of the poor had nearly overtaken the rent of the land. It was high time to review an administration so replete with evils; and which every year was rendering more burdensome and oppressive than before. It remains to be seen whether the great abridgments which have been effected, in consequence of the last reforms on the pauperism of England, are but temporary; and the effect of that more rigorous administration, which, however natural at the outset of a new process, may afterwards relax—when the native principle of the whole system may again develop its powers of mischievous expansion, and prove of the legal and compulsory provision for indigence, that no ingenuity of man can repress its overgrowth. It may require the experience of some years to determine this question.

11. The most important change which has taken place in their management of the poor, is the substitution of what is termed in-door relief, for those allowances which the paupers wont to receive at their own houses; and which are now in a great measure superseded, by the admission of those who apply for legal charity to a general alms-house erected for the district—often comprising a good many parishes. In this way the relief is made greatly more unpalatable to the applicants. It is held out to them in the most repulsive form. If they consent to accept of it, it is at the expense of liberty and home, and all those old associations of place and neighbourhood, which they are forced

to renounce for the discipline and confinement of the great public asylum which has been provided for them. It is thus that the treatment of poverty is assimilated to the treatment of crime. The inmates of the institution receive a maintenance—but a perpetual imprisonment though somewhat mitigated by certain relaxations, is the penalty which they have to pay for it.

12. The experiment is yet far from being completed, but the progress of it is highly instructive as far as it has gone. In some parishes, every pauper who under the former regime was in the habit of receiving out-door relief; but who in exchange for this, was required under the present system to become the inmate of an asylum—has refused the alternative and withdrawn his name from the lists and the allowances of pauperism altogether. It is thus that many thousands of these parochial pensioners all over England, have been driven by the severities or terrors of the new system from the domain of pauperism; and, after betaking themselves to their own resources, do in fact find a sufficiency in these for an independence and a comfort which they never formerly enjoyed. This history, repeated and exemplified in thousands of the parishes in England, is rich in principle, and fraught with the discovery of an important truth. It proves that there was no call, no natural necessity, for that part at least of the enormous expenditure of the former system from which they are now relieved—and that not by any skilfulness in the management of their new system; but by the mere repulsion of its discouragements,

and of the dread which is inspired by it. Instead then of boasting of the wisdom of their new economy, they have far greater reason to acknowledge the egregious folly of their old one; and when in so many of their parishes, they witness the palpable fact, that the great majority of their former paupers, after being deprived of their old allowances, can contrive to live and in all appearance as comfortably as before—this might lead them to apprehend, that, to a great extent at least, the artificial charity of law is uncalled for, and even prepare them for the conclusion that it perhaps were better if the law could be dispensed with altogether.

13. But perhaps it is too much to expect, that a country shall so speedily retrace its way, and so as to make even in one generation, a total recovery of itself from the error of centuries. But other countries, at least, may learn a lesson from the experience of England. They should know how to make a right interpretation of the abridgment which is now being made on the expenses of English pauperism. It demonstrates that there is no necessity, either in nature or in the state of human society, for such a system at all; and it is therefore to be hoped, that other nations will avoid that great blunder in the domestic policy of England, which has been fraught with so many evils to all the classes of society, and to none more than to the poor themselves. Foreigners are far more likely to profit from the history of this great and memorable delusion than the country itself which has been the victim of it, and which at this moment makes striking display of the tenacity of inveterate

and long-established error, in extending the same hurtful policy to Ireland—thereby to aggravate the distempers of that unhappy land.

14. And it is further instructive to observe the expedient by which it is attempted to correct this wrong legislation—not by abolishing the legislation, but by counteracting it with other legislation, wrong too, though in an opposite direction to the former. Thus, a compulsory provision for the poor wears an expression of kindness to the humbler classes of society. But when pauperism, fostered into being by this unwise ordination, made alarming progress, and threatened to annihilate the property of the higher classes—then to arrest and neutralize this mischief, they have devised another ordination, by which to make the pauperism as repulsive as possible to the feelings of those who claim a part in its ministrations. They still keep up the notion of their right to a maintenance in the hearts of the destitute; but, by the new law, it is a maintenance on terms the most hateful and humiliating, and that for the purpose of scaring away as many as possible, of those applicants, who, under the old system, did beset the parish vestries of England—the wretched victims of their own indolence and dissipation. We cannot imagine a state of the law, more fitted to engender the utmost acerbity of feeling among the poor; and indeed to alienate the general body of the common people from the government under which they live. Surely it were better that charity had been left to its own spontaneous operation, and so as to ensure the kindly play of good will on the part of its dis-

pensers and gratitude on the part of its recipients; surely this must give rise to a better and a blander community, than when the one party are led to challenge a sustenance as their privilege and their due; and the other party, to defend themselves against the encroachment, labour to make the privilege as worthless as they may, by assimilating to the uttermost the treatment of paupers to the treatment of criminals. In such a condition of things, we behold the materials of a fierce and fiery fermentation in the hearts of the lower orders —most hurtful to their own spirits, and most hazardous to the peace of society. The first great blunder in this legislation, was to ordain a law of compulsory relief at all; and when, to save the ruinous consequences of this law, the relief was made as degrading as possible, this was attempting to correct one evil by another, or to bring about a right result by what mathematicians would call a compensation of errors. The first may be regarded as a disturbing force in one direction, and the second as a disturbing force in the opposite direction. Let both be removed, and the business of charity, when restored to its own proper character, would proceed in the right and natural course, without error and without deviation.

15. In every way then, it is better for a nation to keep itself clear of any legal enactment for the relief of indigence; and more especially for a government, not to take out of the hands of its people, the duties which they owe either to themselves or to their relatives or to their neighbours. The great lesson to be learned from the example

of England is, that the economic condition of the lower classes is not improved but deteriorated by the establishment of a compulsory provision for the destitute—which provision too, besides aggravating the miseries of their state, has, by introducing the heterogeneous element of an imagined right into the business of charity, turned what ought to have been altogether a matter of love into a matter of angry litigation, and greatly distempered the social condition of England, by the heart-burnings of a perpetual contest between the higher and humbler orders of the commonwealth.

16. But it must be admitted, that, though this be the wise and even benevolent part of a government, devising for the welfare of its subjects, it may not be the policy by which best to conciliate the affections of the multitude. There is in it a certain unmoved and cold-blooded aspect of insensibility to distress—the appearance of a heartless indifference to the sufferings and the sympathies of our common nature. It has been matter of boastful complacency to the writers of England, when expatiating on the perfection of their own government—that they could speak, not merely of the wisdom and the justice, but also of the humanity of their laws: and the law to which they make their most confident appeal in support of this assertion, is their own law of pauperism. It no doubt conduces mightily to the strength and popularity of any government, when it can stand forth in the guise of kindness to the most helpless of its people; but kindness in the expression, or even in the real and honest purpose, may often be cruelty in effect.

And never was this more strikingly exemplified than by England's famous law—prompted we have no doubt, by feelings of the sincerest benevolence; but which, notwithstanding, has enhanced and multiplied tenfold the sufferings that were meant to be relieved by it. It has become therefore all the more desirable, that the occasions should be pointed out, on which a government might have the opportunity of coming forth *ostensibly* as the friend, and so at the same time as to relieve and *substantially* to be the benefactor of the afflicted—with the same aspect of munificence and mercy to the destitute upon its forehead, which made the government of England so popular at the first enactment of its Poor-law; but without those tremendous consequences on the character and comfort of the lower orders, which the experience of centuries has demonstrated to follow inevitably in its train

17. It is the part of every well-principled government to discriminate between a seeming and a real good to the population; and never for the sake of popularity to provide the former, even if it only practise thereby a harmless deceit on the public imagination—and still more, if under the guise of an apparent blessing to the poor, there lurks an influence at once ruinous both to the moral and economic prosperity of the lower orders. But, on the other hand, should the good to be provided be free of any such alloy, and at the same time be as apparent as it is real, then, it is not only a well-principled but an eminently politic and wise proceeding in a government, to determine on the

adoption of it—thereby earning the grateful affections of the people; and, at the same time, scattering amongst them those solid and unquestionable benefits, which may abide the test of experience, and prove to be of great and actual service to the interests of humanity. Now, a law of relief for general indigence does not realize both these conditions. It may carry upon its front an aspect of benignity to the poor; but, fraught with innumerable evils, will at length turn out to be the mockery of an unreal blessing, or rather a deadly act of hostility to their best interests; and all the more grievous, that it is in the semblance and with the promises of truest friendship. In defect of such a law then, can any other law of relief be specified in which both the conditions will hold?—full of promise even at the outset, and not behind in performance afterward—a law which not only expresses some great purpose of obvious benevolence, but which executes that purpose to the full; and without inflicting as the law of pauperism unquestionably does, deterioration or discomfort on the objects of its care.

18. A law of relief for general indigence does not fulfil these conditions; but a law of relief for disease may. There is no fund that can possibly be raised, which will overtake the former. But with a small fraction of the country's wealth, the latter can be overtaken. The distinction between these two objects—that is, between a public charity for the relief of indigence, and a public charity for the relief of disease—must not have occurred to the civilized governments of Europe,

else it would have been more frequently acted on ; and yet on the moment of its being stated, it is a distinction abundantly obvious in itself, and alike obvious in the reasons of it. An ostensible provision for the relief of poverty creates more poverty An ostensible provision for the relief of disease does not create more disease. The human will is enlisted on the side of poverty by the provision which is made for it. No such provision will ever enlist the human will on the side of disease. Let proclamation be made of a law which guarantees every man against starvation—and this were tantamount to the proclaiming a jubilee of exemption from the toils of industry, from the cares of providence, from the duties of family and the sympathies of social life ; and by the check thus given to all the natural incentives, whether of private exertion for one's own interest or of private charity for the good of others, there might ensue a constantly increasing poverty that will ever keep ahead of the increasing fund, by which it is vainly hoped to quell the mischief that rises into greater dimensions with every new and larger attempt to overtake it. To think of providing for the wants of poverty by the ordination of an adequate supply, is every way as irrational, as to aim at the extinction of a fire by pouring oil upon it. It is not so with the attempt to provide, and that even in the most legal and certain and open manner, for the wants of disease. And this is the reason of the difference. Though poverty in itself be not pleasant, yet the path of indolence and dissipation which leads to it, is abundantly pleasant and

alluring; and so thousands are prepared to rush upon this descending path, on the moment that the consequent poverty is disarmed of its terrors, by the protection and the promises of law. It is thus that under such a system men are tempted, and that in constantly increasing numbers, to become voluntarily poor; but no system, no multiplication of funds or of hospitals, will (with a few rare exceptions, far too rare to be practically of any weight in a general argument) tempt men to become voluntarily diseased. No man will break a limb for the sake of its skilful amputation in an infirmary; or put out his eyes for the benefit of admittance to a blind asylum; or become wilfully dumb or deranged or leprous, that he might lay claim to any treatment or guardianship, which may have been provided at the expense of the nation for these respective maladies. In the very constitution of our sentient nature, in its repugnance to pain and physical suffering, we have the strongest possible guarantee against men wilfully becoming patients, in order to their admission into an asylum for disease. We have no such guarantee, but the opposite, against men becoming paupers, in order to their admission into an asylum for indigence. An indefinite provision for want is ever sure to multiply its objects; and the evil recedes and enlarges, with every advance that is made upon it. A certain definite provision on the other hand for disease will be as sure to overtake its objects. By every new contribution we approach the nearer to a distinct and satisfactory fulfilment; nor does the benevolence whether of

the government or of associated philanthropists, need to stay its hand, under the apprehension that one sufferer more will be added to the melancholy catalogue of disease, because of all the care and tenderness which can possibly be bestowed upon it. This forms the great distinction between the two cases. The open proclamation of a free entry into asylums of disease would make a clear abridgment of human misery, and bring no new or additional disease into existence. The like proclamation of a free entry into the asylums of indigence, would bring a world of new poverty into existence, and swell more every year the amount of pauperism. The final outgoing of such a system were at length to absorb all the resources of the country, and beggar its whole population.

19. The antipathy of all our most enlightened political economists to a public charity for the relief of indigence, has been ascribed to a cold and unfeeling hardihood of soul. And the imputation may be true sometimes; but is calumny in all those instances, numerous it is to be hoped, when the moving principle of their hostility is a real concern for the substantial interests of the lower orders—the desire to ward off a system which they honestly believe to have a withering influence both on the character and comfort of the general population. At all events, if it can be demonstrated of any public charity, that it is altogether free of this deleterious tendency, and works an unquestionable good to its objects, without any alloy to discourage or repel the attempts of the benevolent to support it—this holds out a noble

opportunity for the enemies of a Poor-law, to redeem their character, and manifest the real spirit and design by which they are actuated. Now, a public charity for disease just presents this very opportunity. The halt, and the blind, and the maimed, and the impotent, and the dumb, and the lunatic—stand before us, with a special mark impressed upon them by the hand of Providence, and which at once announces both their necessity and their claim, for the unqualified sympathy of all their fellows. It would give rise to no ulterior demand on the benevolence of the country, though receptacles were opened wide enough and frequent enough to harbour them all. A certain definite amount of suffering and distress would be cleared away from the territory of human wretchedness, without any baleful operation on the territory beyond it. That mischief, which, like the spreading leprosy, is ever sure to follow a public and certain provision for indigence, is, on an obvious principle, never to be apprehended from a provision however public and however certain for the cure or alleviation of disease. If it was under the burden of such an apprehension, that these philanthropists stood aloof, and refused their countenance and their aid to the one species of charity —let them now, when relieved from the burden, come forth both with their testimony and their wealth in support of the other species of charity. If in the first place they kept feeling at abeyance, because philosophy forbade the indulgence of it—let them in the second place, when there is no cold obstruction in the way, demonstrate the

power and promptitude of their humanity, by a ready forthgoing of their sympathies, now emancipated from all restraint, on those involuntary distresses which nature and necessity have imposed. By their opposition to the institutes of pauperism, they have proved themselves to be before others in the soundness of their understandings—let them by their large and willing support for the institutes of disease, prove that they are not behind others in the sensibilities of the heart. If at the dictate of reason they withheld their liberalities from the one cause—when the other presents itself, and reason not only withdraws its disallowance but urges its unexceptionable claims, then let them show that they have an eye for pity and a hand open as day for melting charity.

20. That this lesson has yet to be learnt by the great majority of our philanthropists, is obvious from the review of those public charities, which have been founded by the munificence of individuals—whether in the form of bequests or of benevolent associations. It is not many years ago, since a Royal Commission was appointed in Britain, to inquire into the public charities of England and Wales; and it is striking to observe the large number of those which have the relief of indigence for their object, and the very small number which are instituted for the treatment of disease. In the account now before us of these charities abridged from the Commissioners' Reports, we reckoned from the commencement of their enumeration no less than a hundred and thirty six various charities of London and Bristol, of which the great majo-

rity were for indigence alone; and a few for education, before we arrived at one for disease being a charity for blind persons. The erection of alms-houses, the distribution of bread, the supply of coals, loans or gifts of money to the indigent; and a countless variety of other distinctions, but all pointing to the general object of the relief of poverty—these outnumber the institutions for education at least in the proportion of six to one, and the institutions for disease in the proportion of fifty to one. We feel quite assured, whether we take a general survey of the whole country or limit our attention to one of its large towns, that, in the testamentary dispositions of the benevolent, there is a very great and general misdirection of wealth to the wrong object. A known and certain provision held out to indigence, will create the indigence—a provision, however certain or however ample made, for disease, will never create or multiply the disease. And yet, in spite of this obvious consideration, far the greatest proportion of the legacies which are left for benevolent purposes, are left for the relief of poverty which can never be overtaken; and so small a proportion left for disease which may be overtaken, as to come greatly short of the necessity. Within these few years, there have been two magnificent sums bequeathed in charity to the city of Edinburgh; and this will add two asylums to a number formerly in excess—because asylums not for any specific maladies but for general want. Meanwhile the Infirmary is inadequately supported. The Deaf and Dumb Asylum is limited, with a very few ex-

ceptions, to those whose relatives can afford to pay for their maintenance. The Blind Asylum is on a very limited scale, and in great difficulties; and there is no institution at all in the capital of Scotland, for the gratuitous admission of lunatics. By a more judicious destination of their wealth on the part of those two individuals, a real and unquestionable blessing would have been conferred on society—families relieved of their blind, or fatuous, or other diseased members; and without any substitution of families alike helpless and unfortunate in their places. But the reverse of this takes place with the asylums for indigence. Hundreds of poor may be admitted within their thresholds; but these are sure to be replaced by an equal, we think by a greater number, and the general community labours under as great a burden of want and wretchedness as before.

21. It is instructive to observe the relative estimation in which these two objects are held by the charitable—we mean the relief of poverty, and the relief of disease. We thought it a good way of settling this question, to take the volume which presented an account of all the public charities that had been found in a certain number of the towns and parishes in England, abridged from the Reports of the Royal Commissioners on Charitable Foundations. These charities, in the great bulk of them originated in the spontaneous benevolence of individuals who very generally conveyed, not by gifts while they were living but by bequests which took effect after their death, the whole or part of their wealth to certain philan-

thropic purposes. It is marvellous to contemplate the preference which these testators had for the relief of poverty, rather than for the relief of disease. The distinction which we have so much insisted on must not have been present to their minds. They must not have adverted to the utter failure of every attempt by public charity to overtake the indigence of the land, or even to diminish the amount of it—seeing that the relieving process, in virtue of which a certain number were fed and clothed, was followed up and accompanied by a creative process, in virtue of which at least an equal, we think a greater amount of poverty, or of hunger and nakedness, was created in general society. And neither along with this must they have adverted to the obvious impossibility of a similar effect in the treatment of disease—seeing that the relieving process in this department of charity never could be so followed up by a creative process, in virtue of which any more disease could be called into existence. We have reckoned the number of such destinations of which an account is given in the work now referred to—comprehending the Charities of London, along with those of ten other great towns, beside a number of parishes in England; and we find, that, while there are only eleven distinct allotments of land or money for the relief of disease in all these places, there are among the same places no less than 712 for the relief of indigence. It must also be mentioned that the number of Educational Charities amounts to 202; but perhaps it will exhibit a fairer proportion of the two, if we look

separately to each of the distinct localities; and, accordingly, the following are a few examples out of the many. In the borough of Stafford, we have an account of 19 charitable bequests for the indigent, seven for education, and none for disease. For the town of Northampton, we have an account of 31 charitable funds for indigence, and 9 for education, and none for disease. In the city of Gloucester, we have an account of 21 instituted funds for charity, 6 for education, and none for disease. In the town of Leeds, we have an account of 13 public benefactions for the poor, and 8 for education. In the city of York, we recognize 48 benefactions for poverty, and 23 for education. In the large and populous town of Manchester, we mark 31 distinct heads of charity for the poor, and 19 for education. It should be observed, however, that we count every object to be education, which goes any way to the instruction of the people, whether it be in religious doctrine or in ordinary scholarship—including therefore the sums allocated for the repairs of churches, and the preaching of sermons, as well as for the expenses of week-day seminaries. In the laborious enumeration that we drew out, we generally rated all the individual bequests as one, which were made over to one and the same institution. Of the 11 cases of provision for disease we state as specimens the conveyance by Robert Hudson of, eight acres on trust, to apply the rents in providing medicine and medical aid for the poor of the parish of Selby; and the munificent bequest of Mr Thomas Henslow of £20,000 for a blind asy-

lum at Manchester. It was altogether in keeping with this, that the same individual should bequeath £1,000 for the Manchester Infirmary, and £1,000 for a Lunatic Hospital.

22. We are aware that we have taken account of but a very small proportion of the charities in England, and have not even completed the list of the charities in all the places which we have now specified. We were necessarily limited to the examination of such charities as the royal commissioners were empowered to inquire into; but they were not excluded from taking cognizance of the institutions for disease, any more than of the institutions either for want or for learning; and the proportions we have now been enabled to exhibit, do, it is certain, evince most strikingly, a preference on the part of the benevolent founders for those charitable institutions, which have for their object the relief of that indigence into which men might voluntarily descend, and to which descent these bequests hold out a resistless temptation. It is melancholy to think, that, by a small fraction of the wealth thus thrown away, institutions for disease might have been provided all over the land, and so as to leave no involuntary sufferer under the inflictions of nature and necessity, in want of any likely appliance, by which to cure or to alleviate his distress

23. It is not for us to enter into a full detail on the public charities of France. We rejoice to observe in the city of Paris so many institutions for disease, while the sums spent on the public relief of indigence, derived chiefly from the pro-

duce of public shows and public amusements, form but an insignificant fraction of what is expended on the same object in London. We, at the same time, were astonished at the immense proportion which the number who received charity at their own houses, bore to the population of the city—having in 1835 amounted to one in 12.32 of the whole community. It is our confident opinion, yet we desire to express it with all humility and respect, that the sure effect of such distributions is to augment the discomfort and moral deterioration of the lower classes. The sum given to each individual is small; but it should ever be recollected, that the mischief is not proportionally small. That relaxation of industrious and providential habits, and that relaxation also of the family and relative obligations, which are the sure consequences of pauperism, are not to be measured by the sum received but by the sum expected; and each, in virtue of the natural confidence which every man has in his own good fortune, may look for a larger share of the public beneficence, than he shall ever succeed in realizing. It is thus, we apprehend, that every known charity for the relief of indigence multiplies its objects; and it is woful to think, that, while the amount of suffering is increased thereby, it is in virtue of a process which carries along with it the tenfold greater evil of an increase of depravity. The decay of character and the decay of comfort keep pace with each other—for who does not acknowledge, that, if the pride of honest independence, an affection for one's own kindred, and a sympathy for those of one's

own neighbourhood are all enfeebled under a system of pauperism—that system must have a withering influence, both on the worth and the well-being of society? The evil we imagine to be greatly aggravated by those places of reception (*Hospices*) —where applicants, with no other qualification than poverty, find a harbour and a maintenance provided for them. If the out-door relief be of small account—beyond this there is the ulterior prospect of an in-door admittance, to all the necessaries at least, if not the comforts of existence. The magical influence of hope will extend to a far greater multitude than to those actual receivers of charity, who are so far fortunate as to have their hopes at least in part realized. The indolence, the improvidence, the dissipation, the disregard to every claim of family or neighbour—these are the fertile causes of want, or of want unrelieved. And these are stimulated throughout the mass of the community by the promises of pauperism, to a far greater extent than the promises are ever realized. We think, it may with all safety be affirmed, that neither Paris nor any town in Europe has at this moment a less, we think it has a much greater amount of unrelieved poverty, because of the public charities for general indigence which have been established in the midst of them—beguiling the people from a dependence on themselves; and from the duties of family and social life, which they owe to the helpless who are around them.

24. Yet however mischievous in their operation these public institutions for the relief of indigence may be, we do not plead for the *immediate* aboli-

tion of them. We think that even justice requires the continuance of their wonted allowances, to all whom the very existence of these proclaimed charities has allured from the habits of industry and self-dependence. Let them be seen therefore to their graves in the sufficiency of their present allowances, unless it be found on a scrutiny of their cases that they may be committed back again to their own resources. It is only by a gradual process that we desire the extinction of any of those institutions against which we have contended. We would steadily refuse the admission of any new applicants, while we would spare the old recipients; and would rather wait to be delivered from the burden of aiding them by the operation of death, than incur the violence of a movement *per saltum*, by the instant dismissal, either of the actual inmates from their asylums, or of the actual out-door pensioners from the periodical grants which they have been in the habit of receiving. We would not thus violate the law of continuity; but suffer every institute for the relief of poverty gradually to die a natural death, by the successive deaths of the individuals who now depend upon them. Only we would take on no new individuals; and feel assured, that, if these either were taught to draw upon their own resources, or were left to the sympathies whether of neighbourhood or of relationship, we should find, as the result of this change of system—that the community would become economically more comfortable, and morally more virtuous than before.

25. It were well that the governments, both of

states and of cities, were more alive to the distinction which we have endeavoured to unfold, between the one species of charity and the other. The argument against a public charity for indigence, applies so little to the public charities for disease—that practically, while the former ought to be abolished, the latter, with a proper degree of regulation and watchfulness, might be encouraged to the uttermost. If a government endangered somewhat its popularity, by suffering the one class of institutions to fall into desuetude—this, it is to be hoped, would be greatly more than compensated, by the patent character of beneficence and mercy, which stood on their ordinance of an instant provision for all those maladies that come under the best and most effectual treatment in a public asylum. A door might be opened, not only with safety, but with an unalloyed blessing to society—wide enough for the reception of all the maimed, and all the impotent, and all the bereft of their faculties whether of sight or reason or speech or hearing. Infirmaries and fever-hospitals; and even dispensaries, though these last seem the most difficult to be guarded from abuse, might be multiplied to the extent of the necessity if not of the demand for them. We are aware of the complaints which have been made, and nowhere more than in Paris, of the undue advantage that even patients as well as paupers might take of the provision that is made for them. But surely disease admits of being more distinctly and decisively tested than poverty. Neither is the one so multiplied by institutions raised in its behalf, as the

other is. No man can counterfeit the loss of a limb, or even the loss of his sight and reason and hearing, so as long to impose on the guardians of an asylum into which he may have found his way. But any man can counterfeit poverty; or, what is still more decisive, he not only can but he will create poverty—when the temptation of a public and a promised relief are held out to a little more indolence, or a little more dissipation. If there have been mutilations practised, or if there have been a voluntary contraction of real diseases, in order to qualify for the sustenance and the shelter held forth in a place of cure—these, it is demonstrable, compose but an insignificant fraction, compared with that host of unworthy applicants, who crowd the avenue which leads to a place of supply for the wants of indigence. The few and incidental evils which might at times be realized even in an infirmary (*hopital*), do not obscure the line of demarcation between such an institution and a poor's-house (*hospice*)—the evils of which are sure to be multiplied tenfold, with every increase of its funds and its allowances. The fictitious disease which knocks at the door of an asylum, bears a very small proportion to the fictitious poverty. But the great distinction between the two charities lies in this—that the real disease (excepting that which is contracted by vicious indulgence) brought into existence by the provision made for it, bears the proportion of an infinitesimal to the real poverty, which comes into being under the malignant influence of a public charity—by the relaxation of industrious and economical habits, as well as of all

those ties that bind the members whether of a household or of a neighbourhood into a common sympathy with each other.

26. And there is one class of sufferers about whom there can be no mistake, and who possess an indisputable and pre-eminent claim upon human sympathy. We mean those—on whom all the resources of the medical art have been expended in vain; and who, after a season of full probation in an hospital of disease, are at length pronounced to be beyond hope and beyond recovery. The great desideratum is an asylum, or place of refuge for these poor incurables—who, instead of being devolved a heavy and hopeless burden on the families to which they belong, should at least have it in their power to enter some such house of mercy open to receive them—where they might meet with every possible alleviation which human skill can devise, or human kindness can administer. For their sakes it were well, if even the title of the institution were softened from a House for Incurables to a House for Convalescents—through which all who leave the infirmary may pass on their transition to perfect health and strength, after the medical treatment is over; and only those be detained whom the hand of nature has stricken with irrecoverable disease, and whom the God of nature has thus signalized and marked out for the unqualified sympathy of all their fellows.

27. The whole of this argument receives a beautiful illustration, or I would even say is strengthened and confirmed, by the example of our Saviour. He could have brought, nay he actually

on two occasions did bring down, food by miracle, to appease the hunger of a starving multitude; but refused to do so a third time, when, in the sordid expectation of a meal, they ran after him for the purpose of being again regaled by his bounty. "Verily you have come not to see the miracle but to eat of the loaves and be filled." What a contrast between this reserve in the supply of food, and the unexcepted freeness of his ministrations in the supply of health, which he brought down by miracle on every patient who applied to him for a cure. There is no recorded example of his ever having bid away from him the maimed, or the impotent, or the palsied, or the lunatic, or the vexed with sundry and sore diseases; but in every case of which we read, "He looked to them and had compassion on them, and healed them all." I have often thought of this history as a guide and an example to us, in our public charities. For in the notoriety which he attained, any charity of his was in fact a public charity; and it is obvious, that, had he brought down food indefinitely by miracle, it would have discharged the people from all their habits of industry and foresight, and disorganized the whole of Judea by trooping multitudes running after this great prophet for the purpose of being fed by him. But no such consequence was to be apprehended when, instead of a miraculous almoner to all his countrymen, He became a miraculous Physician to those limited and comparatively few who sought the relief of their malady at His hand; and, accordingly, when, in the march of his wise and

effective beneficence through the land of Judea, the dumb, and the blind, and the afflicted with various infirmities, came forth of the surrounding villages—he laid no prohibition on these children of blameless and helpless disease. We have much to learn from this proceeding of our Saviour's; but, whatever discouragements we may draw from his example in the erection of an asylum for indigence, we can draw none against the erection of an asylum for disease. And while the boding apprehension both of moral and physical disaster hangs over the one institution—do we infer of the other that its door may be thrown open, and all its accommodations be widened and multiplied, till every imploring patient be taken in, and a harbour of sufficient amplitude be provided for all those sufferings which an uncontrollable necessity has laid upon the species.

END OF VOLUME TWENTY-FIRST.

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